

Making Marbled Paper

Paint Techniques & Patterns for Classic
& Modern Marbleizing on Paper & Silk



Heather RJ Fletcher, of HRJ Design Studios

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OF HRJ DESIGN STUDIOS





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**When I step into my studio, I step into
a world, and mindset, of wonder and
awe.**

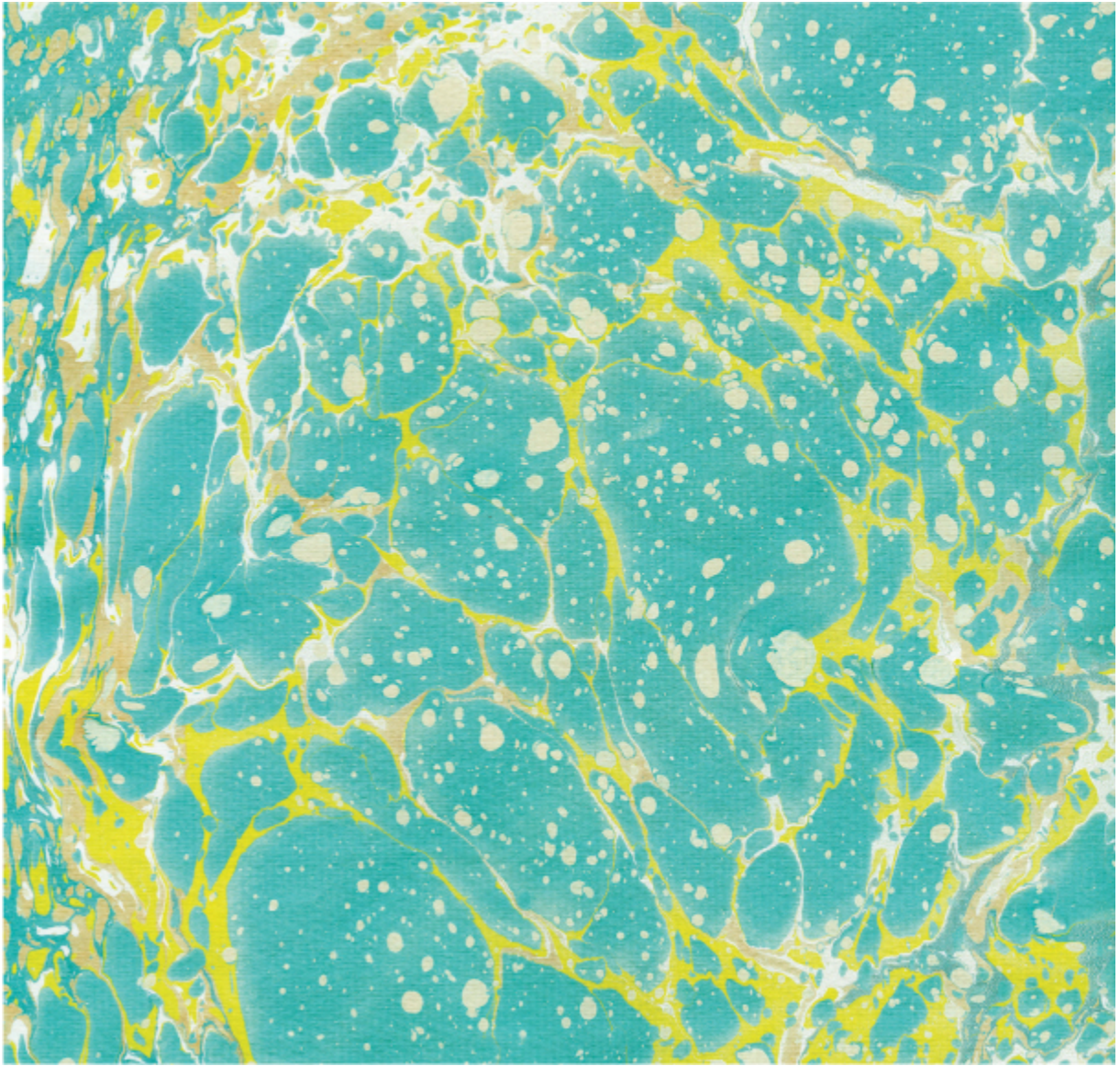
—Barb Skoog, marbler

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The marbling technique *suminagashi* was used in the official government document backgrounds in ancient China and Japan.

INTRODUCTION

Making Marbled Paper is a marbling how-to book that provides you with the steps to create mesmerizing marbled patterns. This book focuses on building a solid foundation and moving to advanced beginner techniques so you can marble with confidence.

A Brief History of Marbling

The first marbling began in Japan in the 11th century when Zen monks used a practice called *suminagashi*, or “floating ink,” as a form of meditation and devotion. Eventually, the royal houses in Japan and China used *suminagashi* as backgrounds for their official government documents.

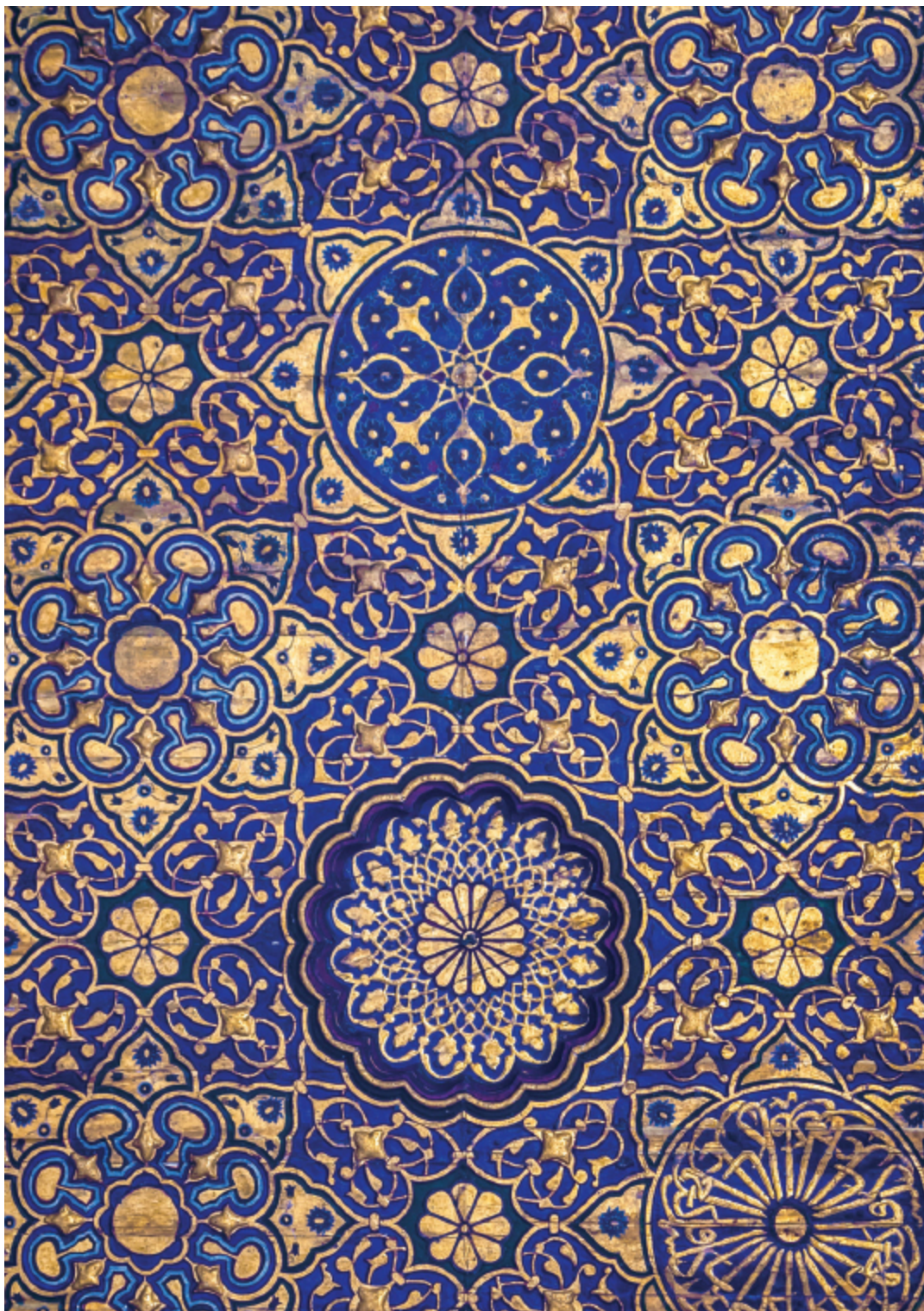
In the 15th century, independent financed trade opened up, allowing merchants and artisans to acquire different craft practices from different parts of the world. Marbling traveled to present-day Turkey and Iran. The craft embedded itself in Turkey. Originally employed as a decoration, marbled papers hung in the great shops of the Ottoman Empire and in the homes of wealthy. They were also given as gifts to kings. Eventually, as done in Japan and China, these unique papers were used for official government documents.

Islam had a profound effect on the craft of marbling. In Islamic public art, sentient beings and animals are forbidden because creation is Allah’s prerogative. Conversely, Islam encouraged the practice of calligraphy, which was written on marbled paper. Marbling became known as *ebru*, or “clouds on water.” The Turks used Arabic gum to thicken their liquid, and locally sourced pigments for their paints.

Merchants from Europe secretly brought back these papers, wrapped with the marbled side down to avoid gift taxes. Tradesman traveled to

Turkey and Persia to learn the craft of marbling. By the early 17th century, guilds were set up to create marbled papers in Europe.

European marbled papers had many uses: end sheets in books, drawer liners, wallpaper, and even book covers. The Europeans used various methods to thicken their *size* (a thickened solution). The paints they used were locally gathered pigments mixed with ground beeswax. When the pigment was dry, journeymen took a smooth stone and burnished the paper. The beeswax coated the paper, preserving it. Without this organic coating, the beautiful papers would have disintegrated with exposure to the climate.



Sentient beings, such as animals and people, are forbidden in Islamic art, so repeating motifs are used instead.



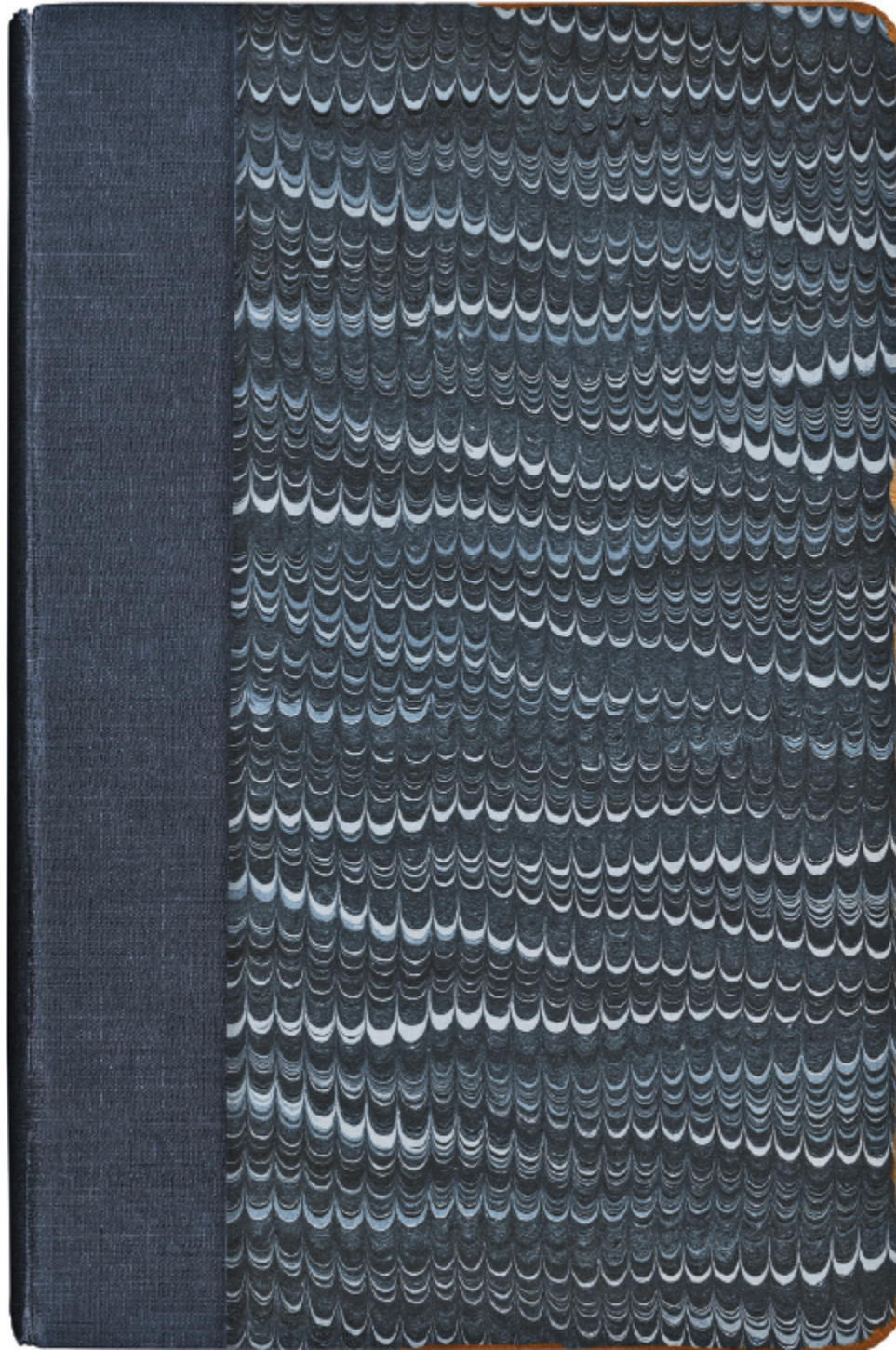
Ebru literally means “clouds on water” and it was a technique popular in Turkey and Central Asia.

Travelers in the 17th century collected examples of decorative marbled papers and bound them into *alba amicorum* (Latin for “books of friendship”). Eventually, marbling was used on formal documents to guard against counterfeiting. Bookkeepers had the edges of their account books marbled, for example, to prevent fraud.

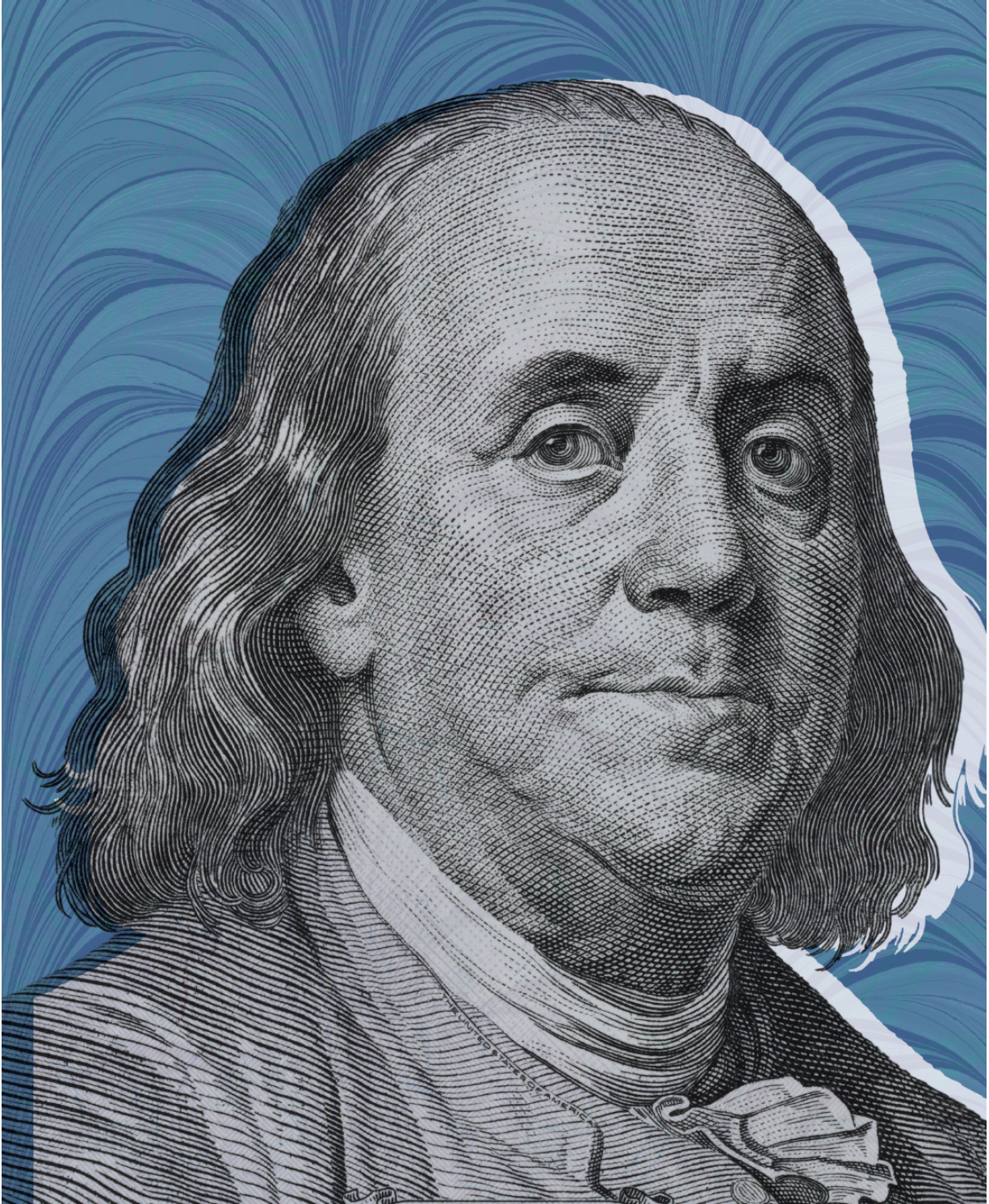
In the United States, Benjamin Franklin lobbied for marbled currency to prevent counterfeiting; unfortunately, his idea did not pass the newly formed Congress. In early American history, few bookbinders and tradespeople practiced the craft of marbling. This was due to the lack of pigments to make the paint in the Colonies and their limited access to a proper sizing agent.

In 1853, Charles Woolnough, an Englishman and expert marbler, published a book called *The Art of Marbling*. This book made the craft more accessible and led to an increase in the number of marblers in Europe and the United States. Around the same time, a marbler by the name of Josef Halfer discovered how to use *carrageenan* (a seaweed extract) for marbling. This material forever changed the way people marbled, especially in the United States.

Today’s marbling has evolved greatly from the centuries-old art form. Modern marbling involves floating paint on water by mixing it with carrageenan to increase the water’s viscosity. This method allows you to create intricate patterns and unique designs with unique, handmade tools. The marbler will then lay paper, fabric, wood, or other porous materials onto the surface of the carrageenan bath so the image is immediately and permanently transferred to the desired surface.



Colonial American bookbinders had limited access to paint pigments and sizing agents, so marbling book covers wasn't a popular technique in the Colonies.



Benjamin Franklin petitioned to marble US currency as a way to inhibit counterfeiting, but ultimately lost.

PART I: YOUR STUDIO



1: Setting Up Your Space



2: Tools & Materials



3: Paints & Colors



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1: Setting Up Your Space

When I first began marbling, my (then) fiancée and I lived in a 600-square-foot (56-square-meter) studio apartment. We were saving for a wedding and did not have the extra funds available to put toward purchasing excessive amounts of new art supplies. So, I improvised with what I had on-hand and taught myself how to marble on the kitchen table.

I used a plastic storage container for the bath, a muffin pan for paints, a few brushes (left over from my art school days), and a chopstick. I placed a drying rack in the bathtub with an old towel at the bottom to catch the dripping paint. (I didn't want the paint to stain the bottom of the bathtub!)

Over a year later, I outgrew my sweet kitchen space. I look back at my time marbling at the kitchen table as a great learning experience. It taught me how to make art in a less-than-ideal setup. Now, when I travel around the world demonstrating and teaching, I have the confidence that I can marble anywhere.

I encourage you to set up a space for marbling wherever you are located. Your space can be a kitchen table, garage, backyard, basement, or spare bedroom. Wherever you decide to start marbling, take a moment and look around. Use whatever tools you already have around the house and only purchase what you don't have (or if you can't spare something). Although you may dream of having an elaborate studio with all sorts of Pinterest-ready gear and tools, the reality is that having a well-curated art studio takes time to grow and acquire tools. Start with the bare essentials (listed below), and buy your other tools as you become more experienced in your art. You should have this list of items within reach every time you marble.

MARBLING SPACE ESSENTIALS

- Table
- A reusable plastic tablecloth, wax paper, or cut-up garbage bag (to protect the table)
- Access to water
- Drying rack (or clothesline)
- Clothespins (if using a clothesline)
- Old towel
- Pan for paints (if you're on a budget, muffin pans work great!)
- Clear plastic tote (to store your materials)
- A marbling space that doesn't have extreme temperature swings



Some bare-essential supplies when you're just beginning to marble: (1) clear plastic tote to store items; (2) old towel to clean up messes; (3) clothespins to hang your finished pieces when drying; (4) drying rack as an

alternative to a clothesline when drying your pieces; and (5) muffin pan to use as a paint palette while marbling.

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2: Tools & Materials

Marbling Tools

Tools can be made from items you find around your house or purchase from the hardware store.

Whisks

Whisks can be made from cut broom straw. Grab a handful of straw and use a rubber band to bind it together. Rinse off the straw with water to remove any particles that might have clung to the straw. Voilà! You have a whisk.

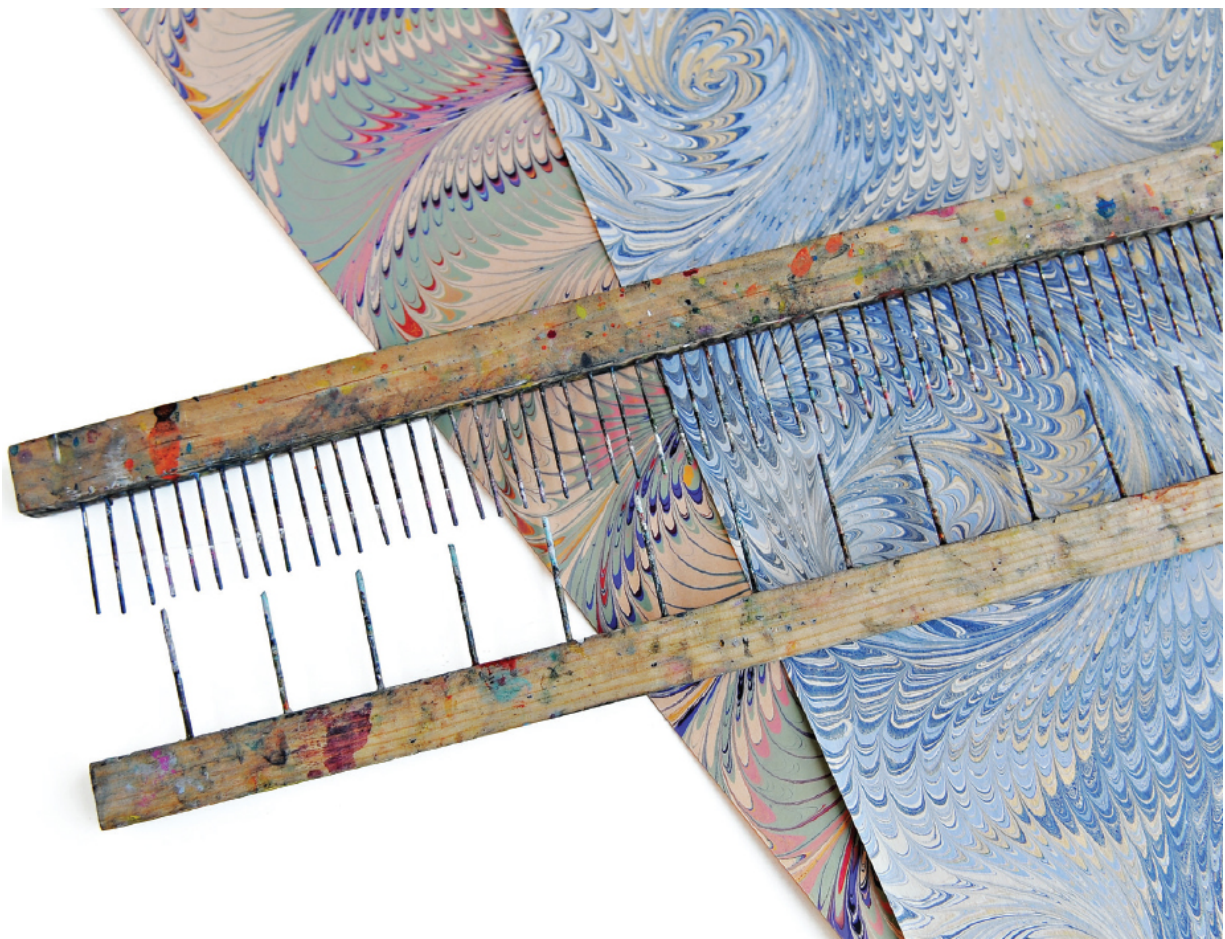






Stylus

The options are numerous. You can use a chopstick, skewer, or really anything that is stick-like in form. Those who practice traditional *ebru* marbling sell custom styluses. They can be inexpensive and worth it if you are planning to marble long term.



Combs

You can make temporary combs out of $\frac{1}{2}$ " (1.27cm)–thick balsa wood and quilting pins. Make combs that fit the length of your tray.

DIY Comb

(for a ¼", ½", 1", 2", or 3" [0.64, 1.27, 2.54, 5.08, or 7.62cm] comb)

1. Draw a line down the middle of the balsa wood.
2. Beginning at the center of the wood piece, measure and mark in increments based on the size comb you're making. (For example, if you're making a 1" [2.54cm] comb, mark the wood in 1" [2.54cm] increments.)
3. Push the quilting pins through where the midline and the incremental marks overlap. Word of caution: The quilting pins are extremely sharp, so be mindful while you're handling them.
4. Use a bead of hot glue or wood glue to hold the pin in place.
5. Allow the glue to set overnight.
6. Use your DIY comb! Repeat the process to make a bunch of different sizes.

You can also purchase wood marbling combs with welding rod teeth online. Depending on the length, purchasing combs can get very expensive; however; it's worth the investment if you plan on being a long-term marbler.

Marbling Materials

There are many “systems” for marbling paper, each using a different kind of paint (ink vs. watercolor vs. oil vs. acrylics) and different substances to float color on the surface. In this book, we will use fluid acrylic paint and carrageenan. Through teaching marbling, I found that these two materials are the easiest to work with for marblers of all levels—from beginners to seasoned professionals. Both carrageenan and acrylic paint are easily available through online retailers and at your local art store.

- ☐ Carrageenan
- ☐ Aluminum sulfate (or alum for short)
- ☐ Gloves
- ☐ Spray bottle
- ☐ Pencil
- ☐ Paper
- ☐ Acrylic paint (I use Golden® Fluid Acrylics)
- ☐ Some sort of vat (or tray), like a jellyroll pan, plastic tub, litter box tray, or whatever you can find
- ☐ Mixing jars for paint (it can be mini jam jars, empty yogurt containers, an ice cube tray, etc.)
- ☐ Two plastic mixing cups (one for mixing alum and the other for water)
- ☐ Plastic squeeze bottle
- ☐ Small paintbrushes
- ☐ Rinse board
- ☐ Blender
- ☐ Measuring spoons
- ☐ Stylus (dowel, chopstick, etc.)
- ☐ Drying rack or clothesline
- ☐ Wooden board (for pressing the paper)
- ☐ Stack of cut newsprint (for cleaning the surface of your vat)
- ☐ Garbage can
- ☐ Marbling combs (see page)
- ☐ Rag





Recipes & Preparation

Carrageenan/“size” (this goes in your vat to thicken water)

- 2 Tablespoons carrageenan per 1 gallon (16 cups) of water

Carrageenan is a seaweed extract that is harvested from the North Atlantic. It is used to thicken the water to create the *marbling sizing* (bath). For the purposes of this book, we'll use carrageenan in its powdered form. The powder can be purchased online or from nearly any art supply store. Carrageenan will be your largest expense when marbling. Treat it like gold!

Gently fold the carrageenan into the water using a blender or hand mixer. Follow the manufacturer's instructions when mixing the carrageenan. It needs to be mixed at least three hours in advance so the bubbles have time to dissipate (24 hours is optimal but not necessary). If you're going to make gallons of carrageenan, I would highly recommend using a countertop blender to save time. Once you use your blender for mixing carrageenan, do not use it for anything else; you can't use soap when cleaning marbling tools or equipment. Soap is a surfactant that affects the chemistry of marbling. Rinse your blender and tools with hot water and air dry when done.

Carrageenan is a food additive used as a thickening agent in coconut milk and ice cream. It is safe to pour down the drain after use. Mixed carrageenan can be refrigerated for up to a month after mixing, but can last up to three days if left out. Store powdered carrageenan in an airtight container.

Paper

There are many paper choices available. Some papers will work better than others. Whether a paper will marble right depends on its *sizing* (a special coating that the manufacturers add to the paper). There are beginner papers

and advanced papers. The advanced types are more expensive and usually sold at fine art stores.



- **Blick® Sulfite Drawing Paper (80 lb.) and construction paper** are both great testing color combinations, pattern practice, and experimental papers. I keep a stack of paper *alumed* (chemically fixed; see here) in my studio as warm-up paper. These papers are my personal go-to when hosting a marbling event with children or a large group. You can use these papers for cards and other crafts.
- **Hahnemuhle Bugra & Ingres** is a lovely, easy-to-work-with paper. The paper can be used for bookbinding, end sheets, wallpaper, drawer liners, fine art pieces, and high-end wedding or celebration décor.
- **Zerkall Ingres and Arturo** are the same as Hahnemuhle (see above).
- **Kozo**, a durable Japanese paper, is great for end sheets, lampshades, fine art pieces, or home décor.
- **Hanji**, a Koran paper, also uses a kozo (see above).
- **French Paper Co.** is another great choice. **Color POP Paper®** offers a wide range of colored paper. Fantastic for marbling and nearly any type of book project. Know that different color papers will enhance or dull your paint colors depending on what color paper is used. (For an example of this, see the difference between the paint colors in the tray and on the purple paper in the Gothic project on page.)

Mixing Alum

No matter what type of paper you choose, you must alum it before you begin marbling. Alum (aluminum sulfate) is a mordant or chemical binder that adheres the paint to the paper. Without it, the paint will slide right off the paper.

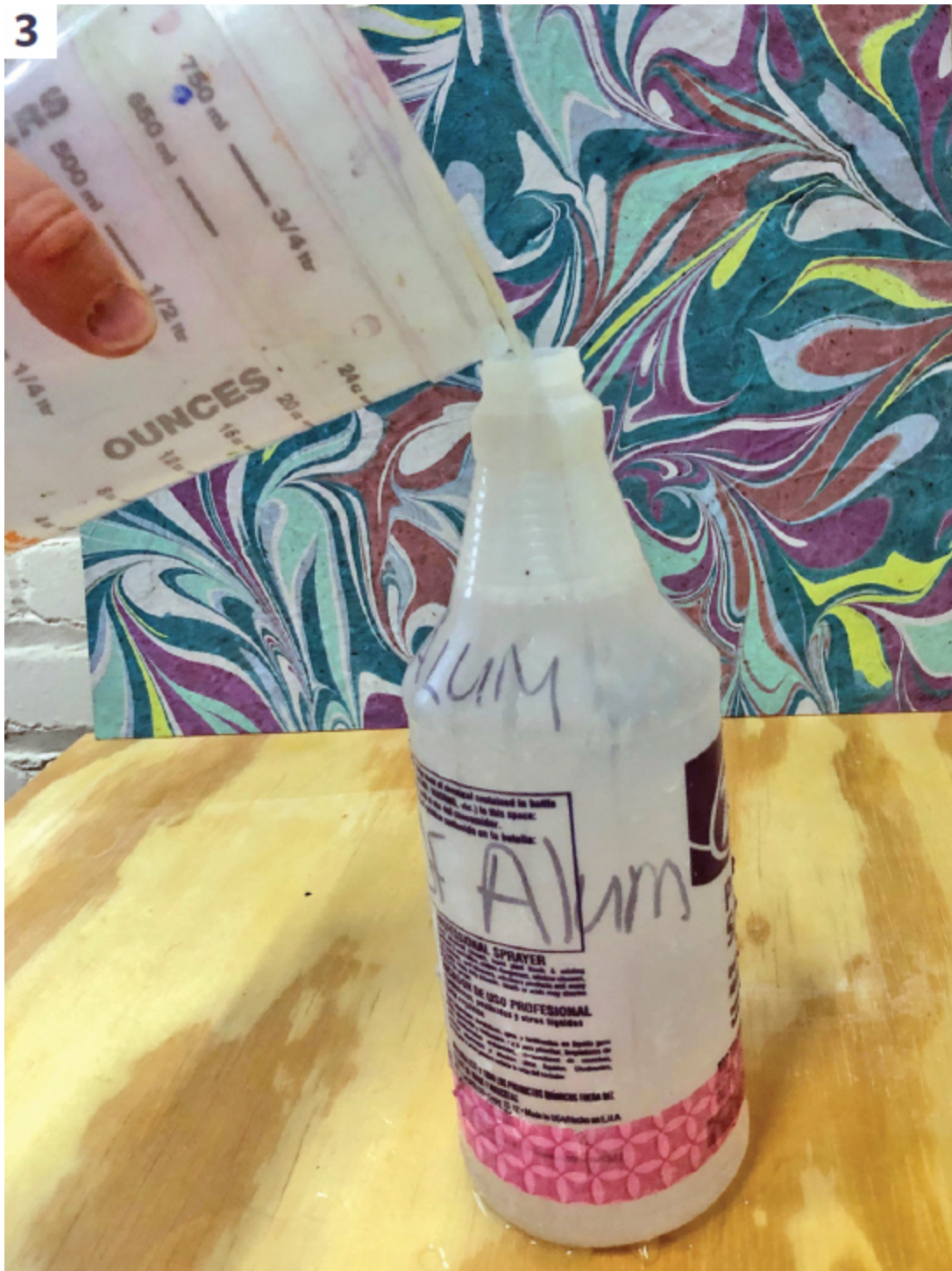
- 1 teaspoon per 1 cup (8 oz.) of water
1. The alum doesn't need to be blended. Use a plastic cup to combine the ingredients.



Mix the alum with warm water and stir with a wooden spoon until dissolved. (The alum
2. crystals will dissolve faster in warm water than they would in cool water.)



3. When the alum is mixed, pour it into a spray bottle. It's ready to use!



How to Alum Paper

1. Place your initials on the side of the papers that you plan to marble.



2. Generously spray the paper with the alum mixture on the side without your initials.



Use a clean sponge or wallpaper applicator to spread the alum out to the edges of the
3. paper.



4. Place the paper under a board to flatten it.

You can marble with slightly damp alumed paper, but be careful; if it's too wet, the paint won't stick or you will get a powdery-looking print. Alum lasts quite a long time, even when mixed. You can alum paper, leave it for months, and the paint will still stick.



Marbling Kits

If you'd like to experiment with marbling and want a low-stakes introduction to the craft, head to your favorite retail craft store, online retailer, or art supplier to purchase a marbling kit. The kits come with all the supplies you will need to get started. The color results are not as dramatic as they would be if you were to use the artist-grade acrylic paint; however, marbling kits are ideal for absolute beginners and children. Follow the directions on the package.

1. Set up all the materials from the kit before you begin, so everything you will need is within reach.



2. Add the first color to the bath.



3. Add your second color to the bath in random spots.



4. Stir the colors with the stylus.



5. Once you're satisfied with the design, place the paper on the surface of the bath.





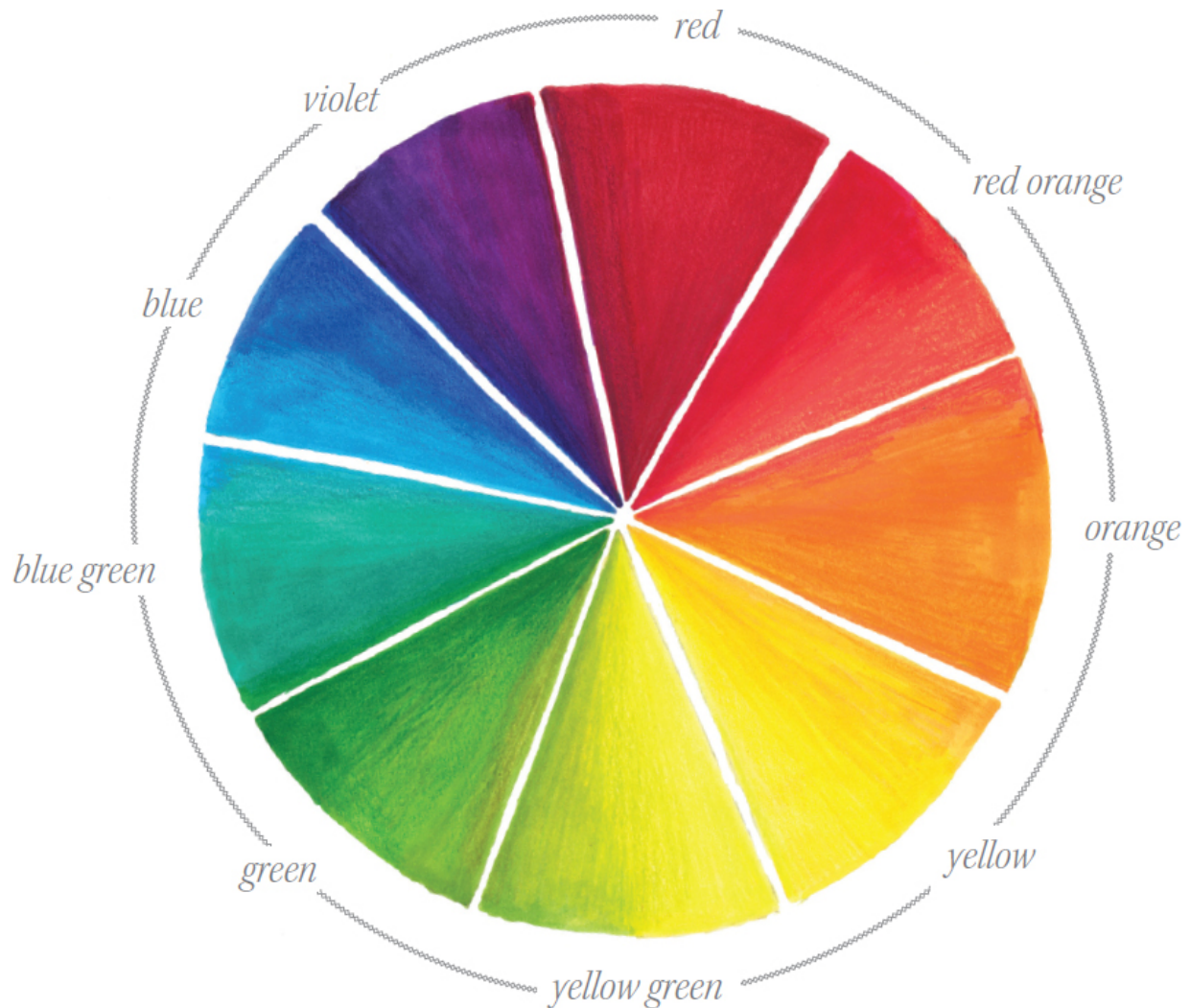
3: Paints & Colors

Every seasoned marbler has a favorite paint brand and variety to use. Some marblers even have their own recipes for making paint. When I teach, I use Golden Fluid Acrylics, which are a great beginner paint. I advise against using craft store paint, because it doesn't have enough pigmentation. Your designs may turn out fairly lackluster.



About Color

Sir Isaac Newton's study of white light led him to discover the visual color spectrum. These happy accidents led Newton to study prisms of light, creating the first color wheel in 1666. To this day, designers and artisans still use it to develop color harmonies and mix palettes.



The color wheel consists of three primary colors: red, yellow, and blue. The three secondary colors are green, orange, and purple. Six tertiary colors are made from a combination of primary and secondary colors. Adding white or black to any of these colors can change the value and hue. If you do not want 50 different paint color canisters lying around, purchase the

primary colors, plus black and white. You'd be surprised how many different colors you can make from the basics.

To select color combinations for your projects, bring copies of your favorite photos, magazines, and even plants into your studio with you. Use them for inspiration when mixing colors. If mixing colors is not your thing, simply purchase the pigments you like and use them right from the bottle.

Be sure to keep a notebook in your studio to record the color combinations you use. Write down your reactions to them as you experiment with your paints. Notice how one color's look will change when placed next to two other different colors. Like most things, the more you do this exercise, the better you will become. Above all, use colors you love. If you love them, you will be much happier with your marbled papers.

Paint Recipe

- 1 tablespoon of artists' grade fluid acrylic to 4 tablespoons of tap water (if you live in an area with a high mineral content in the water, use distilled water)

When you make a stone and/or freestyle pattern, how much paint you put on the size and its distribution depends mostly on your personal preference. The more intense you want the colors, the more paint you should drop.

When creating a “combed” pattern (getgel, nonpareil, chevron), you want to have enough paint on the page to make the pattern clear. Be sure there are no large paint clusters of any color at the end of “throwing” the paint. Significant drops of the same paint color translate into color blocks. The ideal method is to have contrasting colors in each pattern. When you are making a combed pattern, it often makes the pattern more distinct to alternate dark and light colors. Here is an example of how I use nature to inspire my colors. I brought a dried leaf into the studio and matched the colors of the leaf to the pigments. The other photo is the end result.



A NOTE ON MANAGING COLOR “AGGRESSION”

You will find that some colors differ in how aggressive they are on the size. This means some colors will spread further than others when dripped into the bath. The amount of aggression is related to the pigmentation of the color. It's also somewhat related to how much paint is on the size at any given time. For some colors, the color that was dropped just before will determine how much the next color will spread. Over time you begin to learn about the aggressiveness of the colors you use most often.

Sometimes you will want to change the water/paint mixture to manage aggression. Here is the rule:

- If you want the color to be more aggressive (spread more), add pigment to the paint mixture one drop at a time.
- If you want the color to be less aggressive (spread less), add water to the paint mixture one drop at a time.

(Exactly the opposite of what you might think!)



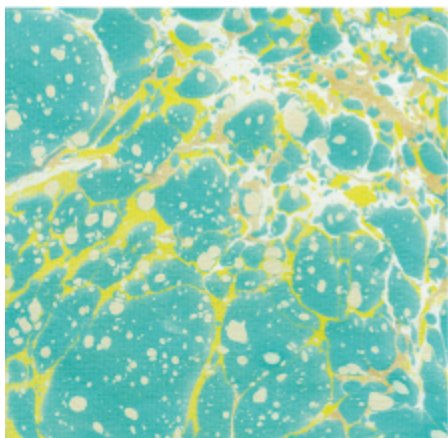
Marbling on Colored Paper

If marbling is just like magic then marbling on colored paper is a form of wizardry. The color paper that you choose to marble will affect the paint colors. For example:

- **Black paper:** White becomes gray, yellows become green, and reds become burgundy.
- **Blue paper:** Blues are enhanced and reds become purple.
- **Red paper:** Reds are intensified and blues become a reddish purple.
- **Pink paper:** Your paint colors will take on a softer and more pastel look.
- **Green paper:** Greens are strengthened, yellows are more lime colored, reds appear more burgundy, and blues will become more teal.
- **Purple paper:** All shades of purple and blue are fantastically heightened in color.

I encourage you to experiment with different paper and paint color combinations. You will feel like an alchemist as you mix and match paint and paper colors.

PART II: PATTERNS



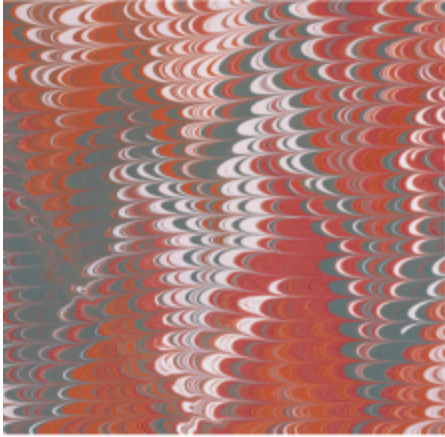
Stone with a Whisk



**Stone with an
Eyedropper**



Getgel



Nonpareil



Chevron



The getgel pattern (see page) is centuries old. The name derives from the Turkish phrase *get gel*, which means “to come and go.”

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4: The Four Foundational Patterns

Congratulations! You've fallen in love with marbling. You have gathered your supplies or purchased a store kit, and you're ready to go. Make your carriageenan (see page) and let it set up while you read this section. Also, alum your paper (see page) and place it under your wooden board to flatten the paper. This chapter focuses on the foundational patterns I call the big four: stone, getgel, nonpareil, and chevron. Learn the "big four" patterns to easily accomplish the more advanced patterns in the subsequent chapters, or even invent your own!

Stone

The stone is the most widely known and the oldest of the marbled patterns. It gets its name because it looks like stones on the beach or on a river bottom, or minerals compressed together in granite.



The stone is the basis of ALL marbling patterns. There are two ways to apply the paint when marbling. The first method is with a whisk (or paintbrush), and the second method is to use an eyedropper. Both methods are correct, each producing different results. Give both processes a try; you'll quickly decide which technique you prefer.

Stone with a Whisk

TOOLS NEEDED:

- Carrageenan bath
- Newspaper or scrap paper
- Paint
- Whisk (or paintbrush)
- Dowel
- Alumed paper
- Rinse board

TIP

Have a design plan in mind before you clean the surface. Decide what colors you are going to use and in what order. Refer to page for inspiration.

DIRECTIONS

1. Skim the surface of the carrageenan with a piece of newspaper or scrap paper. This is an important step, so don't skip it. Skimming clears away trapped dust and debris. You also might notice that a film will form over the top of the carrageenan that will stop your paint from spreading. Once the surface is skimmed, you need to begin applying paint immediately. If you answer a phone call or take a photo to post to social media, the film will form again and you'll have to re-skim.



2. Apply the paint with a whisk (or paintbrush). Hold the whisk in one hand and tap it on the dowel held in the opposite hand. Begin in the middle and work the color outward. Fill the entire tray with the background color. Don't worry if you can't see the color, it's there. Remember, you are painting on thickened water, and not a solid surface; some colors will be transparent. Once the background is flooded, grab your next color and begin applying in the same way.



3. Add five to seven more layers of color (you can repeat colors). Take a step back and look at the color distribution. Are there equal amounts of color everywhere? If not, what color is missing? Add that color. Once you are happy with the result, grab a sheet of dry alumed paper. Remember to alum your paper well before beginning the marbling process (refer to page).



4. Laying the paper down is one of the most challenging parts of marbling. It will take a bit of practice to successfully do it with no air bubbles. Don't fret; I promise you will get it. The method used here is called corner to corner. Make a "U" shape with the paper by holding the opposite corners.



5. Gently lower one corner down so it touches the surface of the bath. Hang onto that edge and lower the rest of the paper onto the bath, moving toward the opposite corner.



6. Once the paper is perfectly flat, lay the rinse board halfway across the tray. Pull the sheet of paper up onto the rinse board.



7. With the paper still on the rinse board, carry it over to the sink. Rinse with a cup of tap water to get rid of the excess carrageenan. You'll want to do this for two reasons: A) rinsing the carrageenan off will make the paper dry faster; and B) carrageenan on the floor is very slippery (think slimy seaweed). If you drip any on the floor, be sure to clean it up right away. Once it's rinsed off of the paper, hang it up on a clothesline or drying rack to dry.



8. Take your time, and have fun! Tape or glue a snippet of your results below. It's helpful to keep a notebook on hand for any special notes about colors used and thoughts you may have while marbling.



TIP

The farther away from the tank the whisk is held, the more broadly dispersed the spread of paint will be; the closer to the tank, the more concentrated the paint will be in that area.

TIP

Be sure your unalumed side of the paper (the side with your initials) is facing toward the ceiling when lowering onto the surface of the bath.

Stone with an Eyedropper

Creating a stone marble pattern with the eyedropper produces a different look, similar to a geode that has been cracked open. To begin, pick out the colors that you'll be using.



TOOLS NEEDED:

- Carrageenan bath
- Newspaper or scrap paper
- Paint
- Eyedroppers
- Alumed paper
- Rinse board

DIRECTIONS

1. Skim the surface of the vat with the newspaper or scrap paper to get rid of dust and any excess paint from your last design. Do this twice.



2. If there is still paint left on the surface, take a strip of newspaper and lay it down on the problem area. Pull it off to remove the extra color. Don't worry if you have color down at the bottom of your vat; what matters is the surface. Any paint below it is "out of play." Now that the surface is clean, you can begin dropping your paint.



3. Before you fill your eyedropper with paint, you'll want to stir your color with the paintbrush to redistribute any pigment that may have settled at the bottom. Squeeze the top of the eyedropper to fill it with paint. Lift up the eyedropper, holding it perpendicular to the work surface. Begin dropping paint onto the carrageenan in the middle of the tray, starting on the side closest to you. Drop the color up the middle. This method is called the *spine technique* (since it looks like a spine, it helps to imagine that you're drawing one).



4. Pause for ten seconds to allow the paint drops to spread. Once the paint spreads, you will repeat the same motion to the left and right of the center drops. Use a different eyedropper for each new color.



5. You'll want to bring the color as far out to the edge of the tray as you possibly can. The goal here is to establish a strong background color. It's similar to prepping a wall to paint; you should prime it first so your main color shows up. After you have your background finished, select your next color and randomly drop paint all over the tray.



6. Repeat again with your third, fourth, and fifth colors.

6A



6B





7. Take a step back to look over and admire your work. Once satisfied, make the “U” shape with your alumed paper.



8. Lay down one corner and slowly roll the paper down until it lays flat on the surface of the bath. Place the rinse board on top of the tank, leaving ample space to pull your paper out.



9. Drag your marbled paper onto the rinse board. Rinse and hang to dry. Take a clipping from your finished piece and glue it onto the space provided on the next page.

9A



9B





Getgel

During the 15th century, a surge of independent merchants ventured around the world in search of new and exotic spices. A group of unknown travelers who went to Japan brought the art of marbling back to present-day Turkey, where marbling took root. Through the years, the Turks developed new tools and technologies for marbling. The next pattern, getgel, is centuries old. The Turkish phrase *get gel* means “to come and go.” This pattern is either made with a comb or a stylus.



TOOLS NEEDED:

- Carrageenan bath
- Newspaper or scrap paper
- Paint
- Eyedroppers
- 1" or 2" (2.54 or 5.08cm) marbling comb (or a stylus)
- Alumed paper
- Rinse board

DIRECTIONS

1. Begin by skimming the surface of the tank. Lay down your background colors with the “spine” method.



2. Add the second, third, and fourth colors (like we did in the stone pattern, on page).



3. Begin with the 1" or 2" (2.54 or 5.08cm) comb. In this example, I used the 2" (5.08cm) comb. Begin by pushing the comb away from you. Notice how the paint begins to form into a pattern around the comb. If you are using a stylus, a pattern will begin to form line by line.



4. Pull the comb out. Shift it to the side until the teeth are in the middle of the previous pass's line. Pull the comb toward you, bisecting the pattern made in step 3.

4

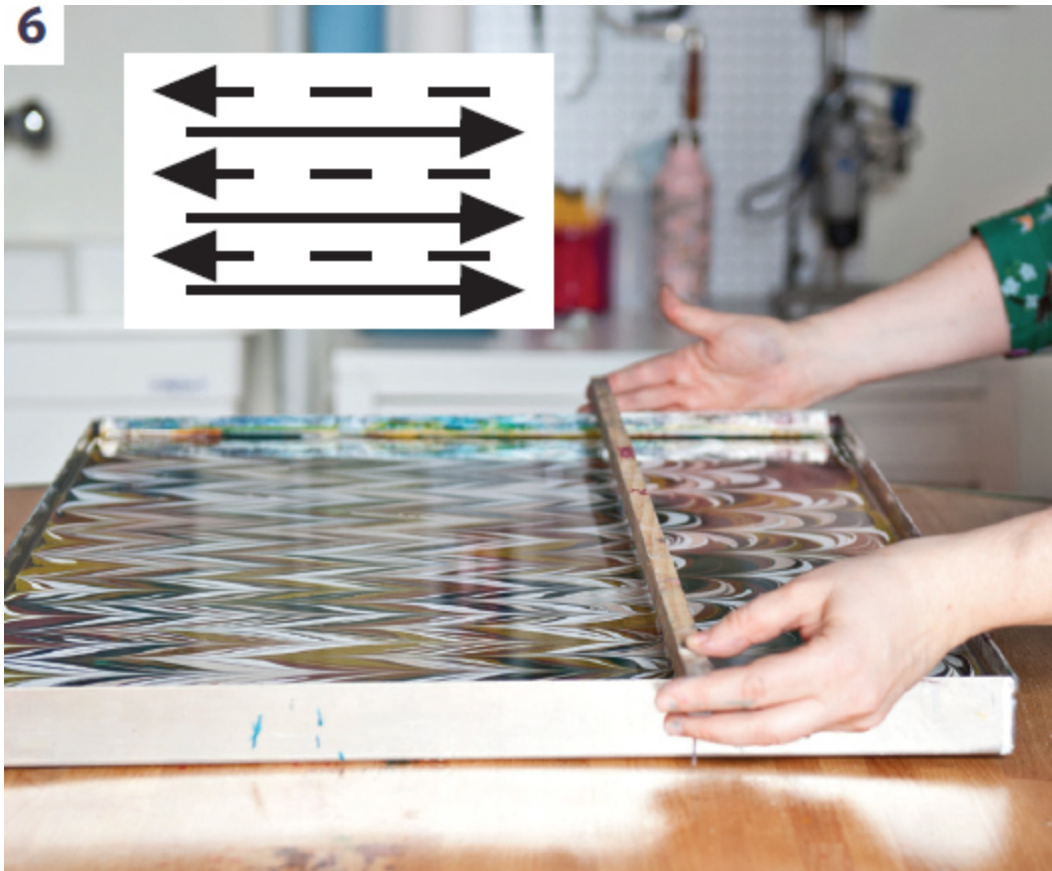




5. Switch sides of the tank, moving 90 degrees from where you started. Place the comb in the tank and push it away from you.



6. Once again, pull the comb out and move it over to bisect the previous pass.



7. Notice how the comb is used to distribute paint into thinner lines across the vat. Create the crazy “U” with your paper and lay it down on the surface of the carrageenan.



8. Place the rinse board on top of the vat. Pull your print onto the rinse board.

8



9. Take it over to the sink and pour a cup of water over it to rinse it.



10. Hang to dry. When your piece is dry, clip a small portion, and tape it below.



TIP

When applying paints, alternate dark and light colors.



Nonpareil

When marbling came to Europe during the late 16th century, the Italians, Spaniards, and French created more patterns. The nonpareil is one of the most well-known of the patterns invented during this time period. The pattern is made on top of a getgel. (Notice how each foundational pattern is built on top of another.) This is my personal favorite of the “big four” patterns.



TOOLS NEEDED:

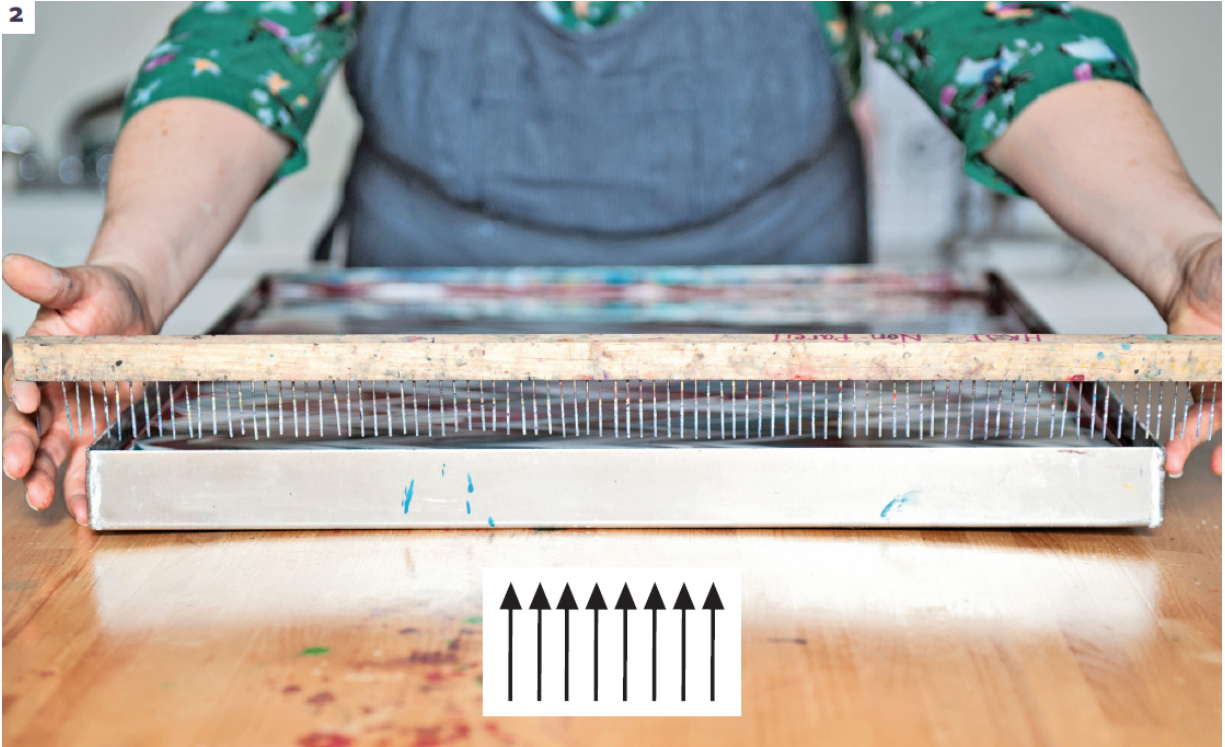
- Carrageenan bath
- Newspaper or scrap paper
- Paint
- Eyedroppers
- 1" or 2" (2.54 or 5.08cm) marbling combs (or a stylus)
- ⅛" or ¼" (0.32 or 0.64cm) marbling comb
- Alumed paper
- Rinse board

DIRECTIONS

1. Begin by making a full getgel (see steps 3–6 here), raking the 1" or 2" (2.54 or 5.08cm) comb up and down in both directions.



2. Once you've made a full getgel, move 90 degrees (back to the side of the vat where you began). With the $\frac{1}{8}$ " (0.32cm) comb, begin at the top of the tank and move the comb toward you. It's like magic!



3. Create the crazy “U” with your paper and lay it down on the surface of the carrageenan.



4. Pull the paper out onto the board, rinse, and hang to dry.

4



4A



5. When dry, clip a corner and glue it onto the space provided on the next page.



Chevron

The last of the big four patterns. Work on perfecting stone, getgel, and nonpareil before moving on to this pattern, which can be frustrating to beginners and experienced marblers alike. The chevron is made like a getgel, only with two different sizes of combs.



TOOLS NEEDED:

- Carrageenan bath
- Newspaper or scrap paper
- Paint
- Eyedroppers
- 2" (5.08cm) marbling comb (or a stylus)
- 1" (2.54cm) marbling comb (or a stylus)
- Alumed paper
- Rinse board

Note: Once you are more experienced, you can use a 1" and ½" (2.54 and 1.27cm) comb for this pattern.

DIRECTIONS

1. Begin with a 2" (5.08cm) comb and make the first part of the getgel. Stop before the 90-degree turn (see steps 1–4, here).



2. Now switch to the 1" (2.54cm) comb and walk to the other side of the tank.



3. Start from closest to you and push the comb away from your body. Pull out and move the comb over to bisect your last move. Pull the comb back toward you.

3A



3B



3C



4. Take your sheet of alumed paper, print, rinse, and hang to dry.



5. Attach a small clipping of your finished piece onto the space provided on the next page.



Now that you've learned the "big four" patterns, you can either keep practicing these or move on to the following chapters to learn more advanced patterns.

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5: Advanced Designs Based on the Four Foundational Patterns

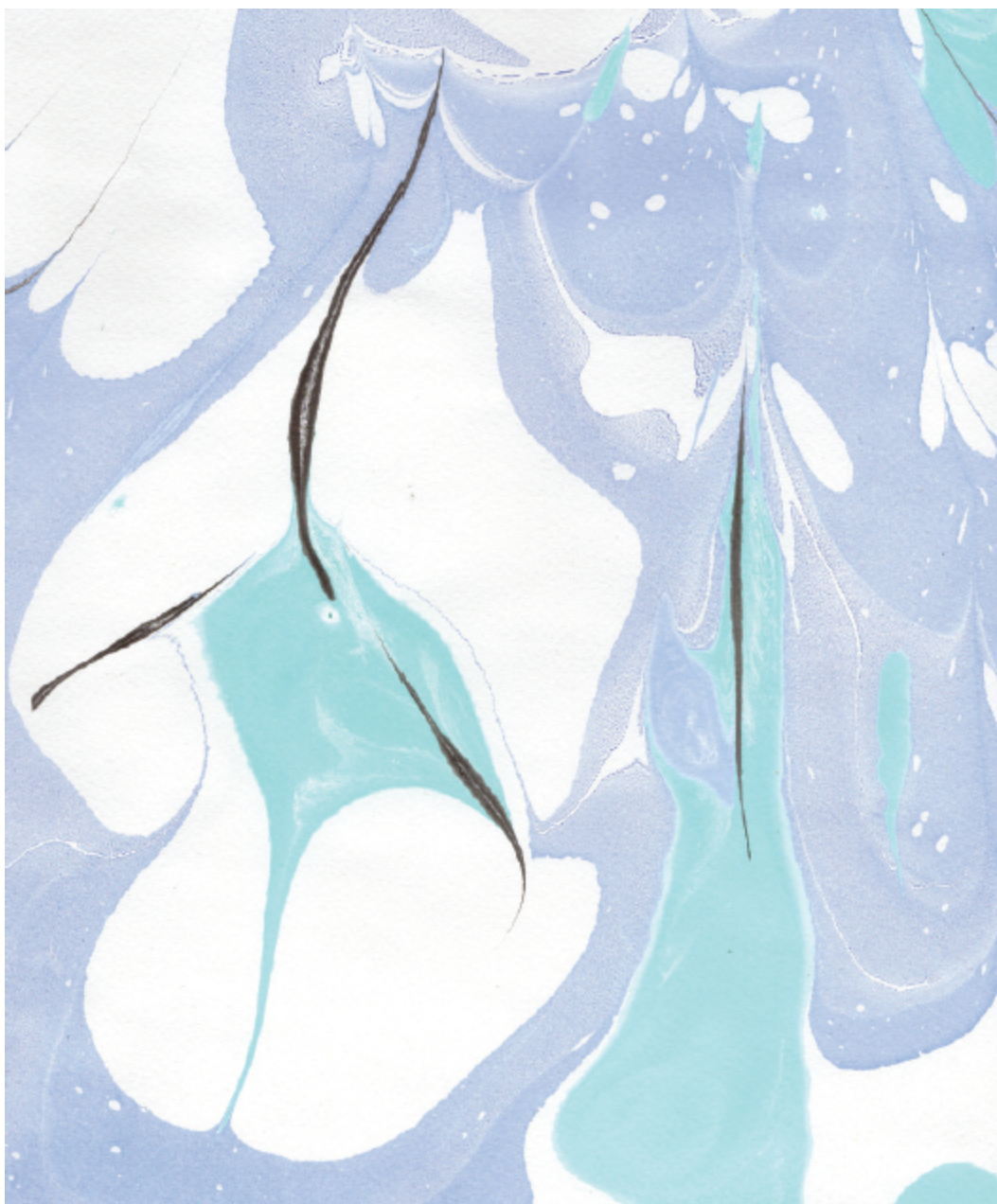
In this next section, we are going to take a deeper dive into learning how to create advanced patterns. Do not try and learn them all at once. Page through and mark the patterns that appeal to you the most. From the group you selected, pick two or three and create those patterns first. Once you feel comfortable, move on the next pattern that resonates with you. Remember, this is supposed to be fun!

Save the first snippets of the patterns you make. I promise that over time you'll want to look back and see where you started. I've included a couple photos here of my first patterns. They may not be perfect, but they are a constant reminder of where I started. They always bring a smile to my face.

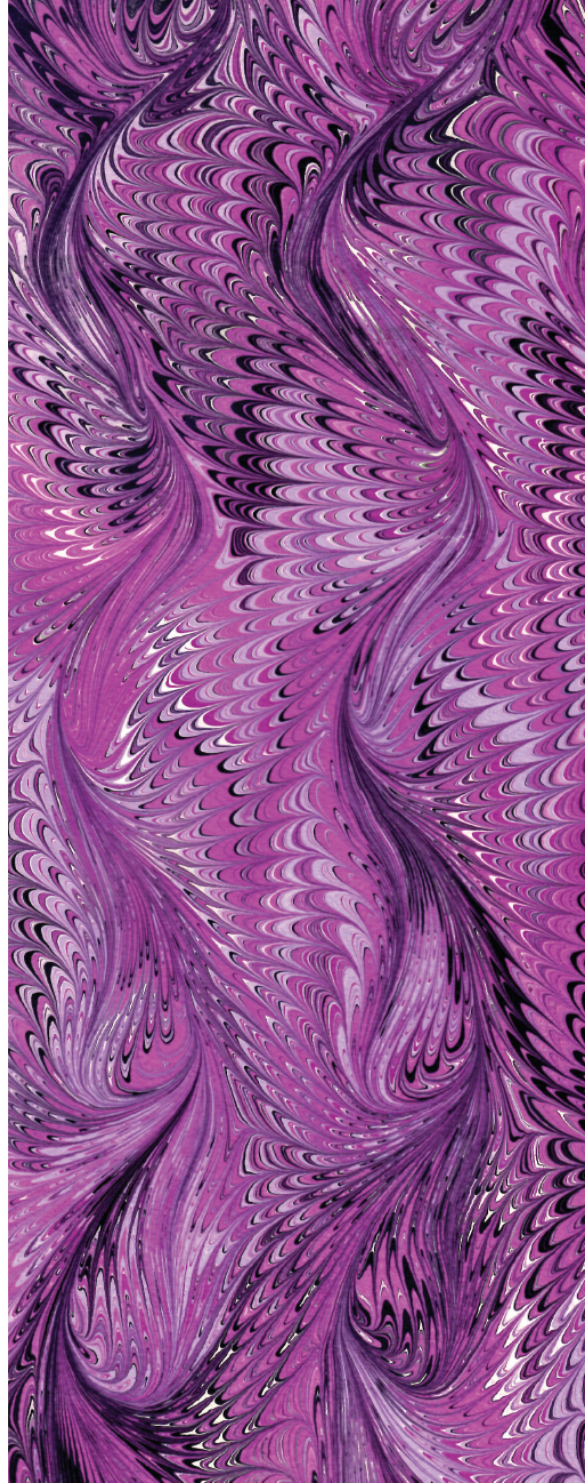
A year after I began marbling, I discovered that the Minnesota Center for Book Arts (MCBA) teaches classes on how to marble. Needless to say, I immediately signed up. I was amazed to see the difference between my marbling before and after I took this class. This was a combination of practice, working with good tools, and the invaluable information taught by the program's fantastic instructors.



One of my first marble patterns.



One of my first marble patterns.



A couple of patterns I made one year after I began marbling.

Advanced Stone Pattern Designs

The previous chapter covered the basic stone pattern (see page). The first section explores patterns that use the stone pattern on its own. Please note that I do not cover how to use solvents and other substances to make historical stone patterns. Historical patterns with solvents deserve their own book.



Freestyle Stone



Moiré

Stone over Marble



Since it is the first step in creating any marbling design, the stone pattern (far left) is the easiest and least complex looking of all the patterns.

Freestyle Stone

Long before marbling combs were invented, people were moving paint around with a stylus. Styluses can be anything from a chopstick, kabob skewer, dowels ... basically any straight tool. The stylus helps move the paint around the surface to create a whole world of individual patterns. The freestyle stone pattern requires minimal tools.



TOOLS NEEDED:

- Carrageenan bath
- Newspaper or scrap paper
- Paint
- Eyedroppers
- Stylus
- Alumed paper
- Rinse board

DIRECTIONS

1. Using an eyedropper, begin with the spine technique. Add five to seven layers of paint.



2. Gently move the paint around with the stylus, mixing straight lines and curves.

2



3. Lay the paper down, pull up, rinse, and hang to dry.



Moiré

The backstory behind this particular pattern is humorous. The story goes that an apprentice came in to work, still intoxicated from the night before. The apprentice kept on jarring the table, making the marbling tank move as he was laying the paper down. Instead of being angry with his young apprentice, the master marbler decided to name the pattern *moiré* (rippled, wavy patterns).



TOOLS NEEDED:

- Carrageenan bath
- Newspaper or scrap paper
- Paint
- Eyedroppers
- Alumed paper
- Rinse board

DIRECTIONS

1. Use an eyedropper and the spine technique to drop the paint.



2. Add five to seven layers of paint.



3. To print the image, hold the paper diagonally and roll it down while moving it back and forth across the bath.



4. When done, pull up, rinse, and hang to dry. This technique looks deceptively simple, but you may need to practice it a few times. It's fun once you get the hang of it.



Stone over Marble

Over-marbling your paper can lead to unexpected surprises and fun results. You can do the over-marble technique on *any* pattern!



TOOLS NEEDED:

- Carrageenan bath
- Newspaper or scrap paper
- Paint
- Eyedroppers
- Alumed paper
- Rinse board

DIRECTIONS

1. Begin with the spine technique of dropping the paint with an eyedropper. You could also randomly drop paint anywhere on the surface.



2. Add five layers of paint—use darker colors for the bottom layers. Lay the paper down, pull up, rinse, and hang to dry. Once it is dry, re-alum the paper.



3. Choose three lighter colors. Randomly drop paint on the surface. Only add three layers of paint.



4. Lay the paper down, pull up, rinse, and hang to dry. Voilà! You have a great piece that you can frame or give as a gift.



Advanced Getgel Pattern Designs

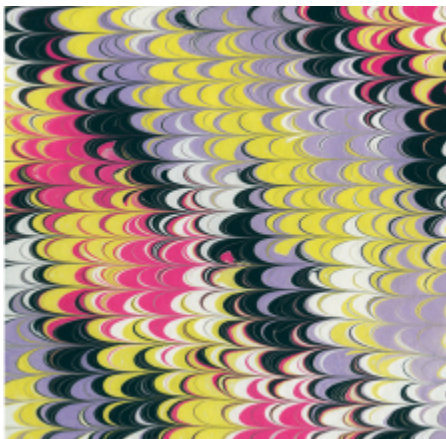
Although the use of a stylus may be used in stone patterns (see page), getgel patterns take it a step further by using tools to make linear-line designs. Throughout this section, you may use either a stylus or a comb for any of the patterns; however, it's quicker and easier to use a comb.



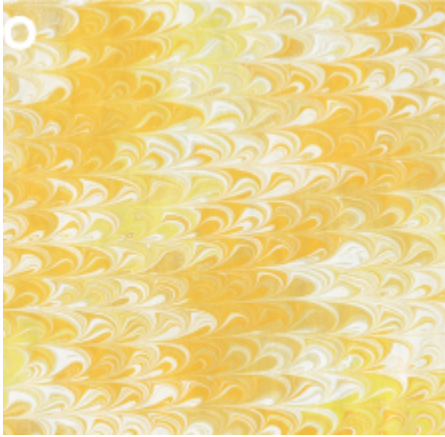
The Zebra



The Laurel



Cascade



The American



Getgel Curl



Angel Fish



The getgel pattern is the foundation to creating nonpareil and chevron designs. Take the time to familiarize yourself with the following getgel designs to build a deeper understanding in creating this fun linear pattern.

The Zebra

I have yet to figure out why this pattern is called a zebra. I went to the local zoo to check out zebras, up close and personal. I badgered a poor zookeeper with a thousand questions, such as, “Does a zebra have spots?” Still, I did not find a very satisfying answer. My only conclusion is: I simply don’t know. Whatever the reason for the name, it’s still a beautiful pattern.



TOOLS NEEDED:

- Carrageenan bath
- Newspaper or scrap paper
- Paint
- Eyedroppers
- 1" or 2" (2.54 or 5.08cm) marbling comb(or a stylus)
- Paintbrush or whisk
- Dowel
- Alumed paper
- Rinse board

DIRECTIONS

1. Begin by skimming the surface of the tank. Lay down your background colors with the “spine” method.



2. Apply five to seven layers of color.



3. Make a getgel with the 1" or 2" (2.54 or 5.08cm) comb.



4. Dip the paintbrush (or whisk) in a light-colored paint. Gently flick the paint onto the surface. Apply an even distribution of paint over the entire surface. Lay the paper down, pull up, rinse, and hang to dry.



The Laurel

Every time I begin a getgel pattern, I always want to stop at the halfway point. I think the simplicity of this design deserves its day in the sunlight. I named this “The Laurel” because it reminds me of the laurel leaves on a bay tree.



TOOLS NEEDED:

- Carrageenan bath
- Newspaper or scrap paper
- Paint
- Eyedroppers
- 2" (5.08cm) marbling comb (or a stylus)
- Alumed paper
- Rinse board

DIRECTIONS

1. Begin by skimming the surface of the tank. Lay down your background colors with the “spine” method.



2. Apply three to five layers of color.



3. Make half of a getgel with the 2" (5.08cm) comb (see steps 3 and 4 here).



3B



4. Lay the paper down, pull up, rinse, and hang to dry.



Cascade

The colors in this pattern really take center stage. By mixing bright pink and green with neutral gray, black, and white, Cascade is sure to be eye-catching.



TOOLS NEEDED:

- Carrageenan bath
- Newspaper or scrap paper
- Paint
- Eyedroppers
- 1" or 2" (2.54 or 5.08cm) marbling comb(or a stylus)
- ½" (1.27cm) marbling comb
- Alumed paper
- Rinse board

DIRECTIONS

1. Begin by skimming the surface of the tank. Lay down your background colors with the “spine” method.

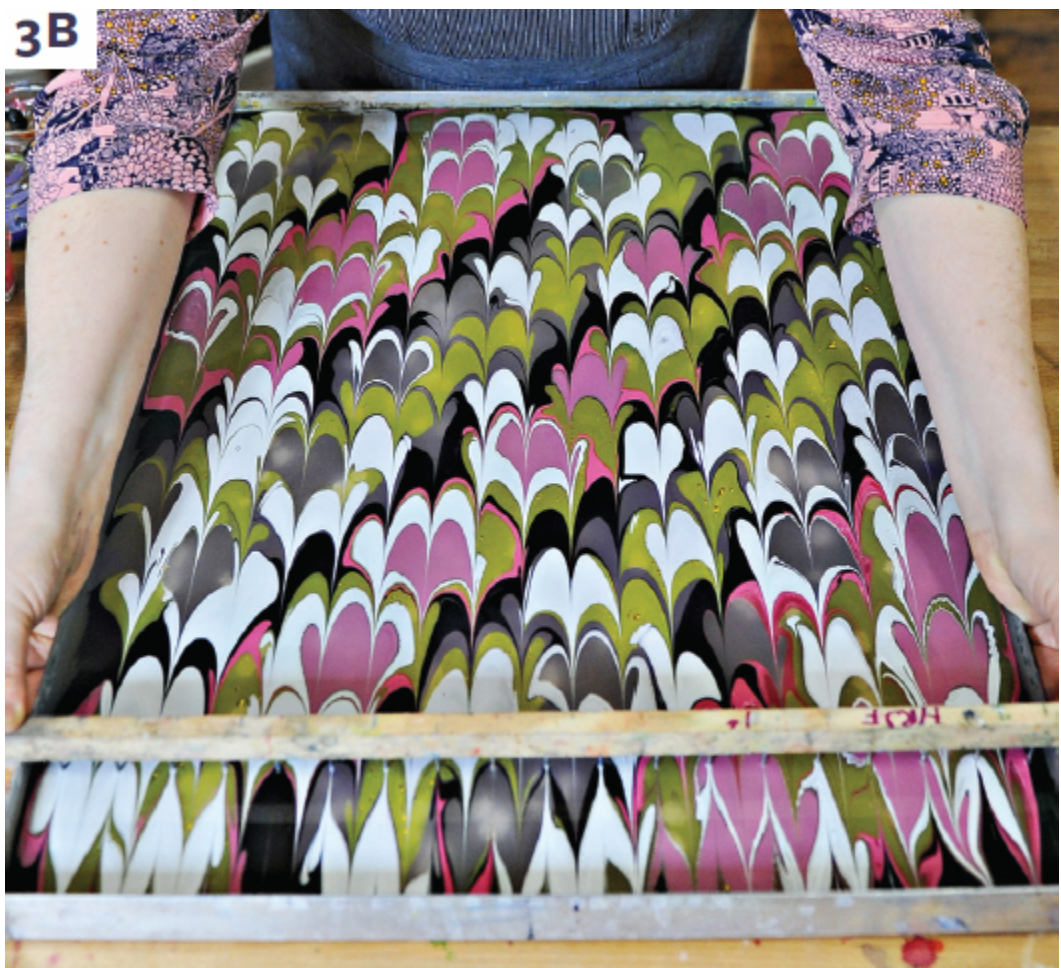


2. Apply five to seven layers of color.



3. Make a getgel with the 1" or 2" (2.54 or 5.08cm) comb.





4. Use the ½" (1.27cm) comb next. Place it at the top of the vat and pull it toward you as if you were making a nonpareil.



5. Lay the paper down, pull up, rinse, and hang to dry.

The American

This pattern is great if you are going to do small projects because the tiny marbled design in bright yellow will still have a huge impact.



TOOLS NEEDED:

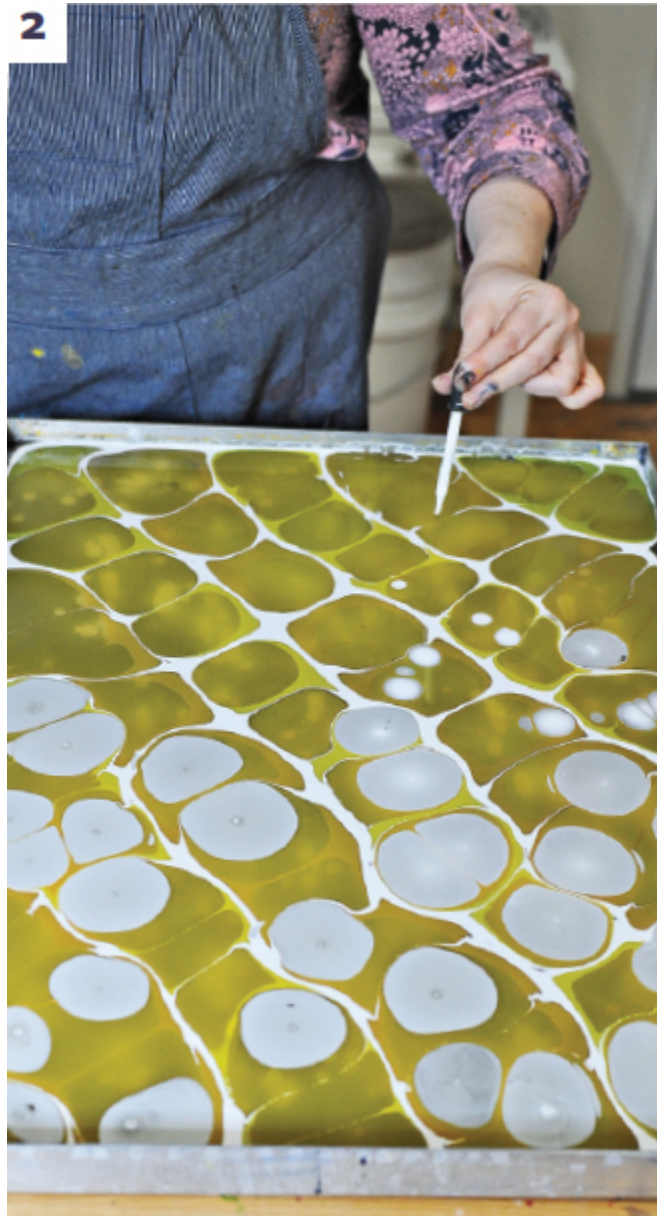
- Carrageenan bath
- Newspaper or scrap paper
- Paint
- Eyedroppers
- 1" or 2" (2.54 or 5.08cm) marbling comb (or a stylus)
- ½" (1.27cm) marbling comb
- Alumed paper
- Rinse board

DIRECTIONS

1. Begin by skimming the surface of the tank. Lay down your background colors with the “spine” method.



2. Apply five to seven layers of color on a diagonal.



3. Make a getgel with the 1" or 2" (2.54 or 5.08cm) comb.



4. Use the $\frac{1}{2}$ " (1.27cm) comb next. Place it at the top of the vat and pull it toward you as if you were making a nonpareil.



5. Move to the side of the tank and pull the same $\frac{1}{2}$ " (1.27cm) comb from east to west.



6. Lay the paper down, pull up, rinse, and hang to dry.

6



Getgel Curl

This is a fun pattern that reminds me of ocean waves churning in a colorful sea. Using the stylus to make the swirls really lets you have fun creating the pattern.



TOOLS NEEDED:

- Carrageenan bath
- Newspaper or scrap paper
- Paint
- Eyedroppers
- 1" or 2" (2.54 or 5.08cm) marbling comb (or a stylus)
- Stylus
- Alumed paper
- Rinse board

DIRECTIONS

1. Begin by skimming the surface of the tank. Lay down your background colors with the “spine” method.



2. Apply five to seven layers of color.



3. Make a getgel with the 1" or 2" (2.54 or 5.08cm) comb.



4. With the stylus, make clockwise and counterclockwise spirals in the opposite direction of the getgel.





5. Lay the paper down, pull up, rinse, and hang to dry.

Angel Fish

Naming of marbled patterns is clearly inspired by nature. The angelfish lives up to its name, although I think it also looks like a complex tessellation. By using a calming blue and bold orange contrasting palette, this pattern really pops!



TOOLS NEEDED:

- Carrageenan bath
- Newspaper or scrap paper
- Paint
- Eyedroppers
- 1" (2.54cm) marbling comb (or a stylus)
- 2" (5.08cm) marbling comb
- Alumed paper
- Rinse board

DIRECTIONS

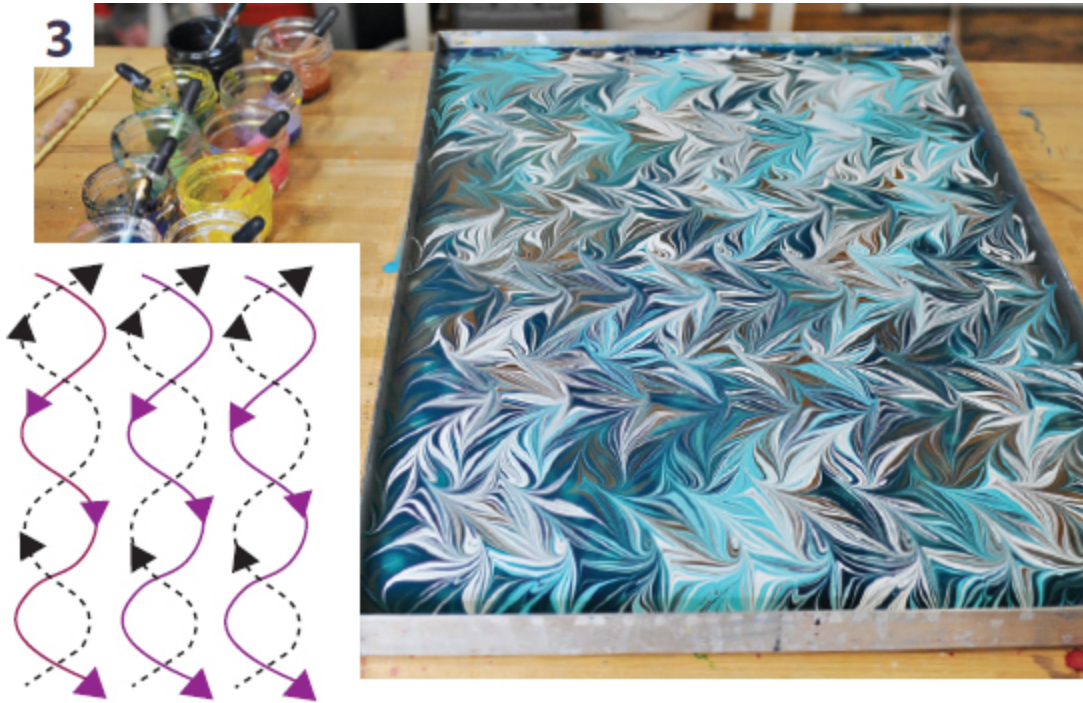
1. Begin by skimming the surface of the tank. Lay down your background colors with the "spine" method. Apply five to seven layers of color. Make a getgel with the 1" (2.54cm) comb.



2. Make a large or small letter "S" across the tank with the 2" (5.08cm) comb.



3. Return across the tank in a similar “S” motion crossing over the first pass.

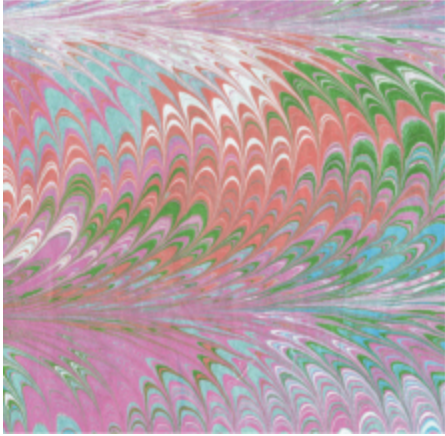


4. Lay the paper down, pull up, rinse, and hang to dry.



Advanced Nonpareil Pattern Designs

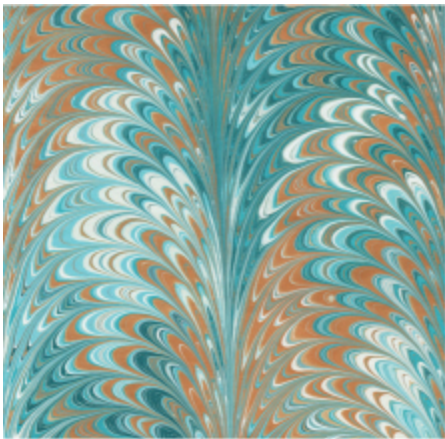
The following patterns are some personal favorites of my mine and my students. They are beautifully complex and never cease to bring applause whenever they are demonstrated.



Icarus

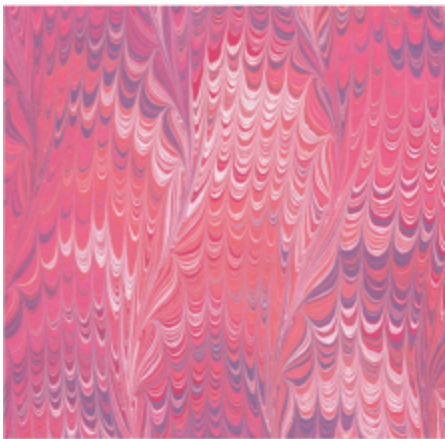
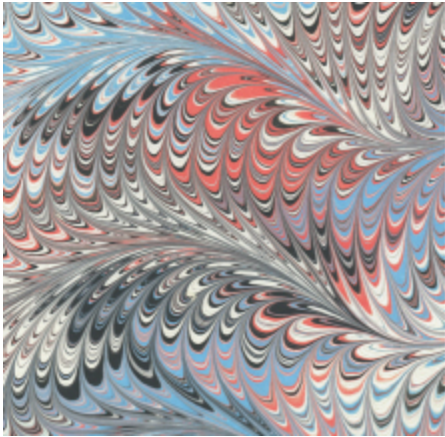


Waved Icarus



Feather

Waved Feather

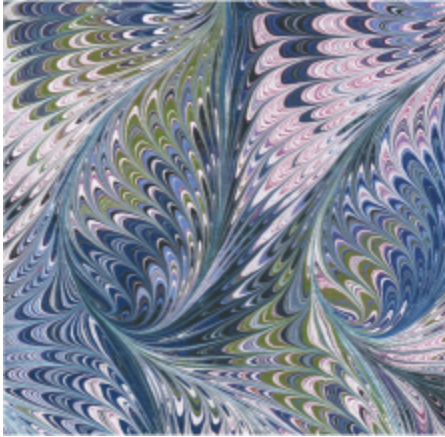


Gothic



Faux Bouquet

Angel Wings



The Double Nonpareil



Nonpareil patterns look complex, but with time and practice, you'll come to find these designs to be some of your favorites to do, as well!

Icarus

This pattern makes me think of the famous Greek myth figure of the same name. The delicacy of the pattern is enhanced by mixing pastel colors with bold green.

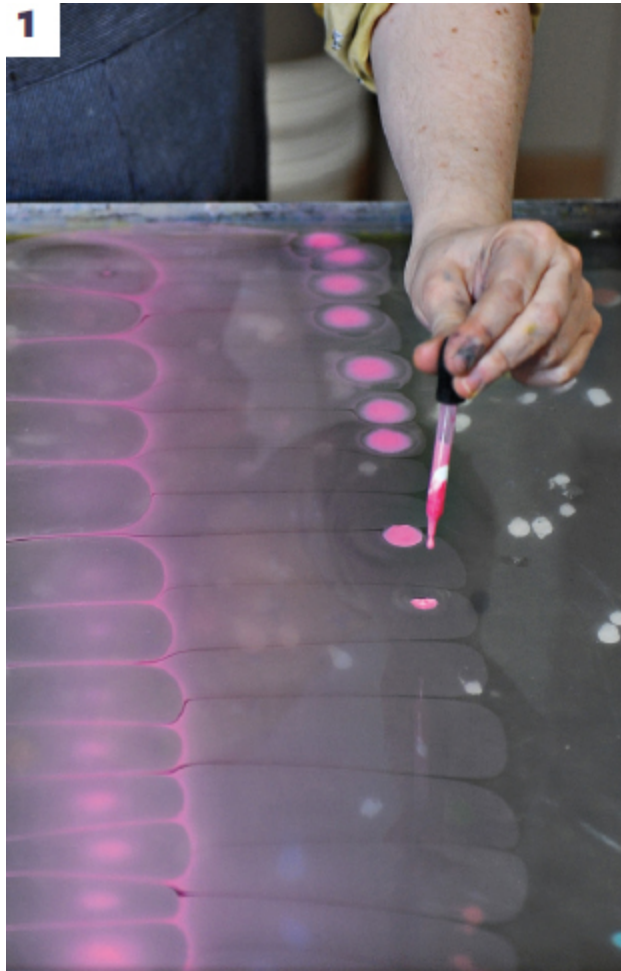


TOOLS NEEDED:

- Carrageenan bath
- Newspaper or scrap paper
- Paint
- Eyedroppers
- 1" or 2" (2.54 or 5.08cm) marbling comb (or a stylus)
- ¼" (0.64cm) marbling comb
- 1½" (3.81cm) marbling comb
- Alumed paper
- Rinse board

DIRECTIONS

1. Begin by skimming the surface of the tank. Lay down your background colors with the “spine” method.



2. Apply five to seven layers of color.



3. Make a getgel with the 1" or 2" (2.54 or 5.08cm) comb. Next, pick up the ¼" (0.64cm) comb and pull it toward you.



4. Change to the 1½" (3.81cm) comb, move to the long side of the tank, and pull the comb from west to east.



5. Repeat step 3.



6. Repeat step 4.



7. Lay the paper down, pull up, rinse, and hang to dry.



Waved Icarus

This pattern is made like Icarus (page) but with a little extra wave added at the end. This simple difference—plus the use of brighter colors—makes these two similar patterns look very different.



TOOLS NEEDED:

- Carrageenan bath
- Newspaper or scrap paper
- Paint
- Eyedroppers
- 1" or 2" (2.54 or 5.08cm) marbling comb (or a stylus)
- ¼" (0.64cm) marbling comb
- 1½" (3.81cm) marbling comb
- Alumed paper
- Rinse board

DIRECTIONS

1. Begin by skimming the surface of the tank. Lay down your background colors with the “spine” method.



2. Apply five to seven layers of color.



3. Make a getgel with the 1" or 2" (2.54 or 5.08cm) comb. Change to the $\frac{1}{4}$ " (0.64cm) comb and pull it toward you. Move to the long side of the tank. Push the $\frac{1}{4}$ " (0.64cm) comb from west to east.



4. Move back to the bottom of the tray and pull the $\frac{1}{4}$ " (0.64cm) comb toward you.



5. Move back to the side of the tray and push the 1½" (3.81cm) comb from west to east.



6. With the 1½" (3.81cm) comb, pull it from west to east while making an "S" motion.



7. Lay the paper down, pull up, rinse, and hang to dry.

7



Feather

This nonpareil pattern looks about as complex as a bird's feather, but is deceptively easy to make. I chose a palette of blue, white, and brown reminiscent of a warm spring day.



TOOLS NEEDED:

- Carrageenan bath
- Newspaper or scrap paper
- Paint
- Eyedroppers
- 1" or 2" (2.54 or 5.08cm) marbling comb (or a stylus)
- ¼" (0.64cm) marbling comb
- 2" (3.81cm) marbling comb
- Alumed paper
- Rinse board

DIRECTIONS

1. Begin by skimming the surface of the tank. Lay down your background colors with the “spine” method in a diagonal direction. Apply five to seven layers of color.



2. Make a getgel with the 1" or 2" (2.54 or 5.08cm) comb.



3. With the $\frac{1}{4}$ " (0.64cm) comb, pull it toward you.



4. Change to the 2" (3.81cm) comb, move to the other side of the tank, and pull the comb from west to east. Then pull the comb from east to west.



5. Repeat step 3.



6. Move back to the other side of the tank. Pull the comb from west to east.



7. Lay the paper down, pull up, rinse, and hang to dry.



Waved Feather

Like the Feather pattern (page), this marbled design reminds me of a bird's feathers, but with more movement as if the bird is in flight. By simply adding a wave to the pattern and choosing more subdued colors, the whole design takes on a completely different look.



TOOLS NEEDED:

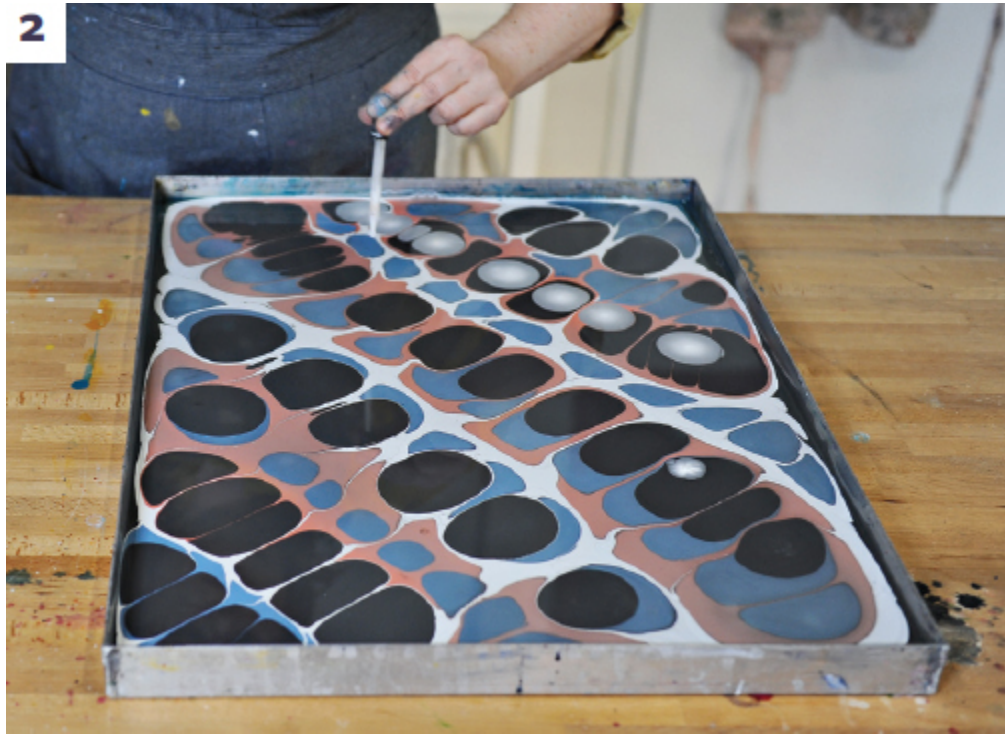
- Carrageenan bath
- Newspaper or scrap paper
- Paint
- Eyedroppers
- 1" or 2" (2.54 or 5.08cm) marbling comb (or a stylus)
- ¼" (0.64cm) marbling comb
- 2" (3.81cm) marbling comb
- Alumed paper
- Rinse board

DIRECTIONS

1. Begin by skimming the surface of the tank. Lay down your background colors with the “spine” method in a diagonal direction.



2. Apply five to seven layers of color.



3. Make a getgel with the 1" or 2" (2.54 or 5.08cm) comb. Change to the ¼" (0.64cm) comb and pull it toward you.



4. With the 2" (3.81cm) comb, move straight across from west to east, then from east to west.



5. Change to the $\frac{1}{4}$ " (0.64cm) comb and pull it toward you.



6. Return to the longer side and make an “S” motion from east to west.



7. Lay the paper down, pull up, rinse, and hang to dry.



Gothic

Nothing says “historical” like this pattern. It’s inspired by the churches from the High and Late Middle Ages. Instead of choosing the more traditional, serious colors from that time period, I decided to go with a much happier tone by using bright reds, pinks, and lilacs.



Notice that the color in the vat is different than the color on the paper. In this case, a teal piece of Japanese paper was used. The color of the paper will affect the outcome of paint color.

TOOLS NEEDED:

- Carrageenan bath
- Newspaper or scrap paper
- Paint
- Eyedroppers
- 1" or 2" (2.54 or 5.08cm) marbling comb(or a stylus)
- ¼" (0.64cm) marbling comb
- 3" (7.62cm) marbling comb
- Alumed paper
- Rinse board

DIRECTIONS

1. Begin by skimming the surface of the tank. Lay down your background colors with the "spine" method.



2. Apply five to seven layers of color.



3. Make a getgel with the 1" or 2" (2.54 or 5.08cm) comb. Change to the $\frac{1}{4}$ " (0.64cm) comb and pull it toward you.



4. With the 3" (7.62cm) comb, move over the last pass (as made with the $\frac{1}{4}$ " [0.64cm] comb), waving toward you. When you reach the end of the tank, bisect and wave back the opposite way, mirroring the last pass.



5. Lay the paper down, pull up, rinse, and hang to dry.



Faux Bouquet

In this book, I do not get into the bouquet comb. It is very complex to use and requires hours of practice to be successful at it. This book helps you master the foundational and advanced patterns, and once you feel you're comfortable with those, you can move on to using the actual bouquet comb. This pattern gives the appearance of using the bouquet comb minus the struggle.



TOOLS NEEDED:

- Carrageenan bath
- Newspaper or scrap paper
- Paint
- Eyedroppers
- 1" or 2" (2.54 or 5.08cm) marbling comb (or a stylus)
- ¼" (0.64cm) marbling comb
- 3" (7.62cm) marbling comb
- Alumed paper
- Rinse board

DIRECTIONS

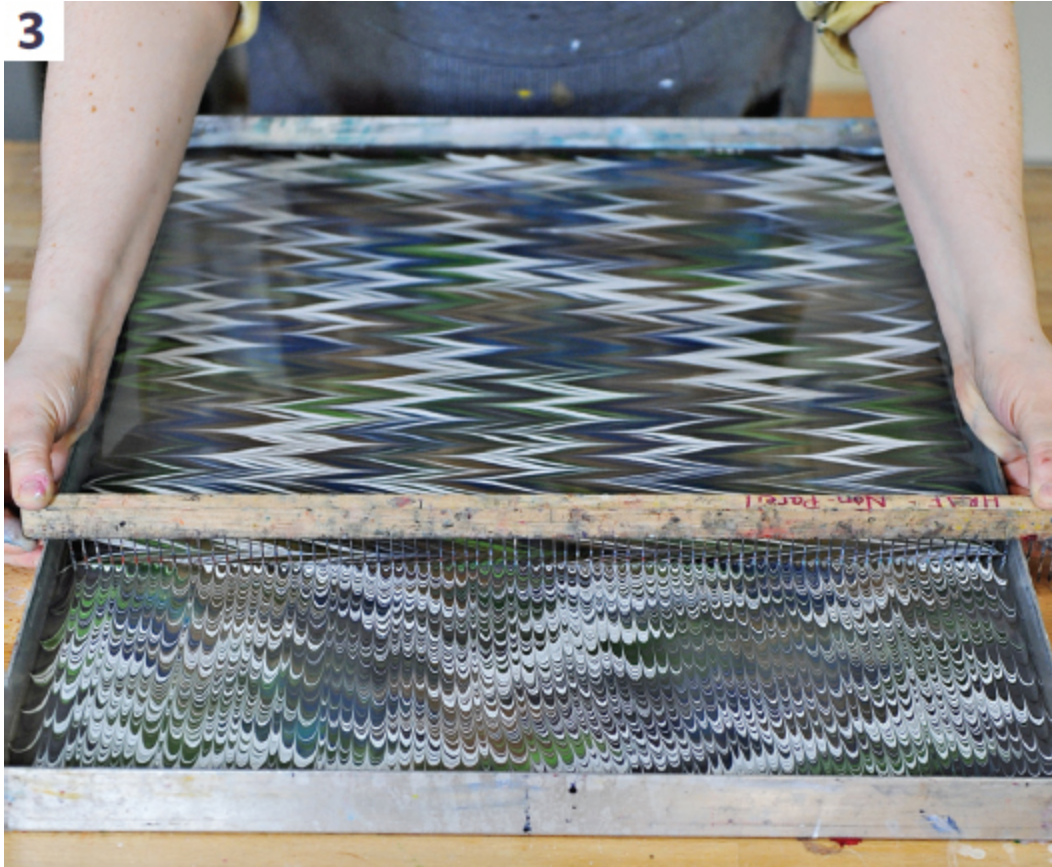
1. Begin by skimming the surface of the tank. Lay down your background colors with the "spine" method. Apply five to seven layers of color.



2. Make a getgel with the 1" or 2" (2.54 or 5.08cm) comb.



3. Change to the $\frac{1}{4}$ " (0.64cm) comb and pull the comb toward you.



4. With the 3" (7.62cm) comb, begin at the bottom. Move over the same pass as done with the $\frac{1}{4}$ " (0.64cm) comb in step 3.



5. Lay the paper down, pull up, rinse, and hang to dry.



Angel Wings

There is something very magical and otherworldly about this pattern. There is a sense of drama and beauty, with hint a of ethereal charm. Since the color purple is associated with magic and royalty, I used a range of purples, from deep indigo to airy lavender, to add to this unearthly design.



TOOLS NEEDED:

- Carrageenan bath
- Newspaper or scrap paper
- Paint
- Eyedroppers
- 1" (2.54cm) marbling comb (or a stylus)
- ¼" (0.64cm) marbling comb (or a stylus)
- 3" (7.62cm) marbling comb
- Alumed paper
- Rinse board

DIRECTIONS

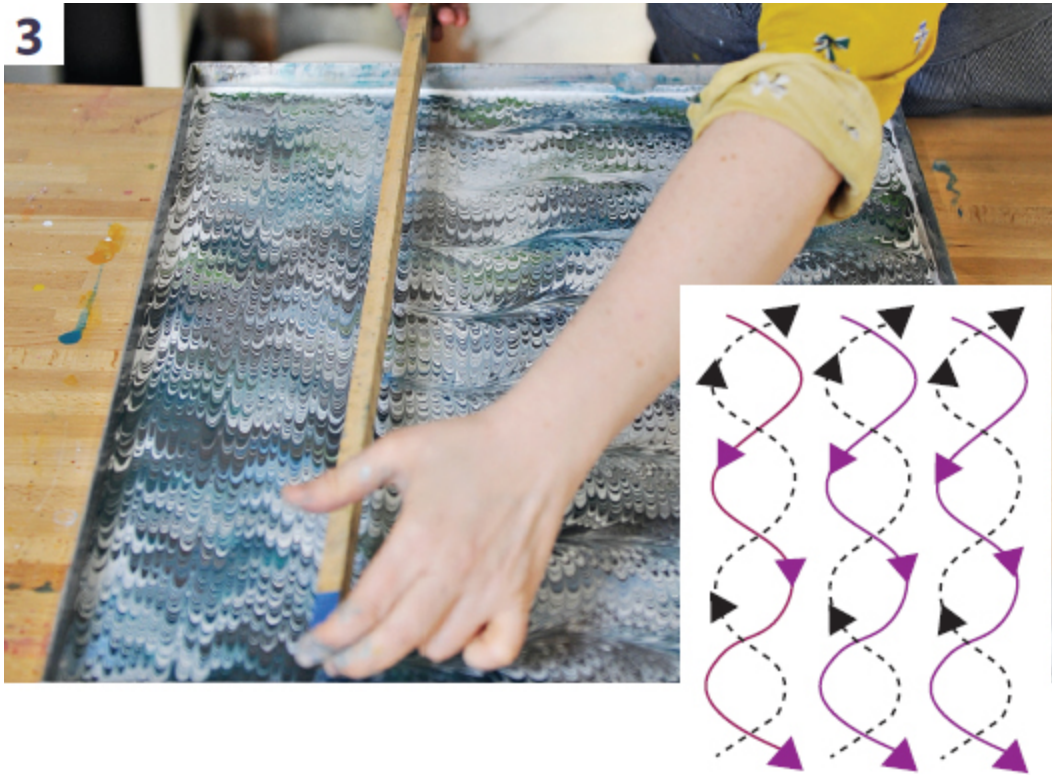
1. Begin by skimming the surface of the tank. Lay down your background colors with the “spine” method. Apply five to seven layers of color.



2. Make a getgel with the 1" (2.54cm) and ¼" (0.64cm) combs.



3. Make large or small "S" shapes across the tank with the 3" (7.62cm) comb. Return across the tank in a similar "S" motion, crossing over the first pass.



4. Lay the paper down, pull up, rinse, and hang to dry.



The Double Nonpareil

I would encourage you to make this comb for yourself. Though it's not the easiest one to make, it's worth the time. The delicate pattern created from this comb is perfect for small projects like making jewelry, bookbinding tiny books, or subtle background for a photograph.



TOOLS NEEDED:

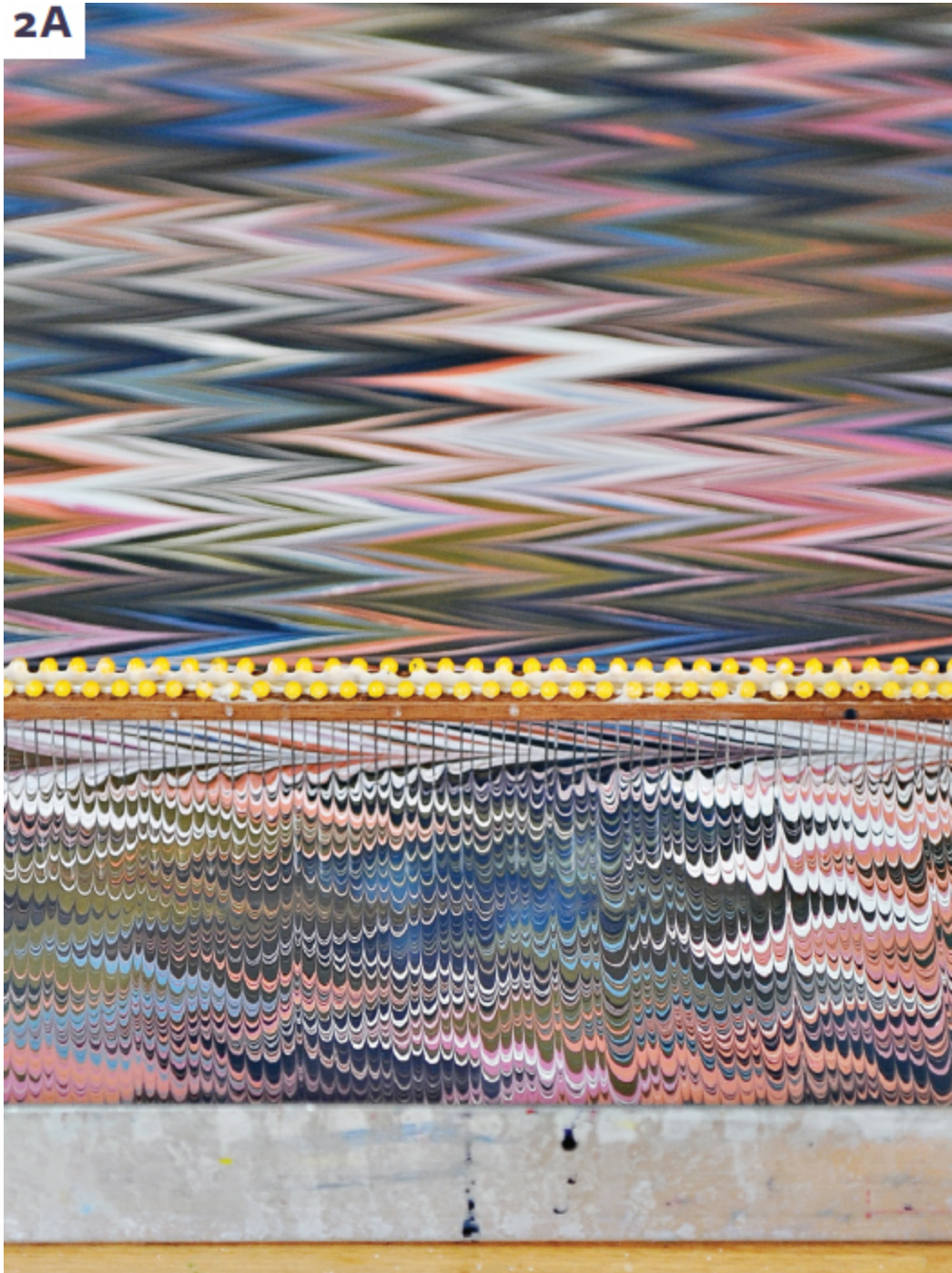
- Carrageenan bath
- Newspaper or scrap paper
- Paint
- Eyedroppers
- 1" (2.54cm) marbling comb (or a stylus)
- A double-rowed ¼" (0.64cm) marbling comb (aka double-nonpareil comb)
- Alumed paper
- Rinse board

DIRECTIONS

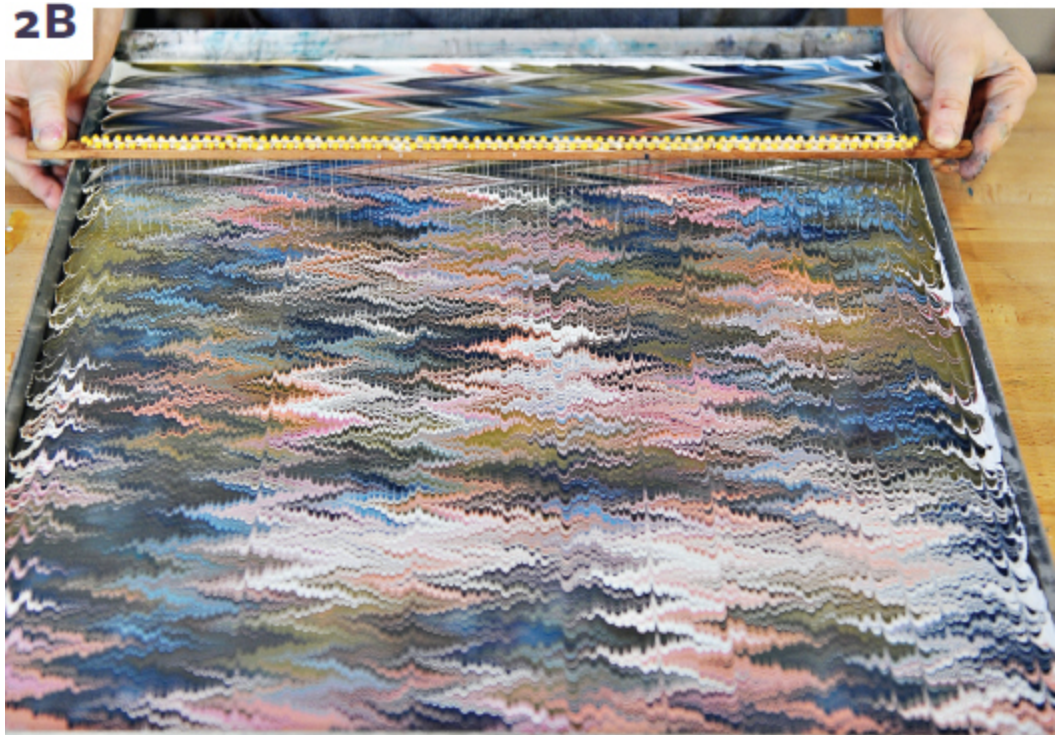
1. Begin by skimming the surface of the tank. Lay down your background colors with the "spine" method. Apply five to seven layers of color. Make a getgel with a 1" (2.54cm) comb.



2. Reposition yourself 90° (or back to where you started). Pick up the double-nonpareil comb, begin at the top of tank, and pull the comb toward you.



2B



3. Lay the paper down, pull up, rinse, and hang to dry.

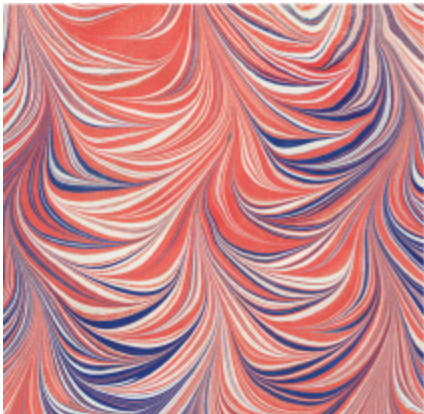


Advanced Chevron Pattern Designs

One of the classic marbling patterns is the chevron. The advanced designs based on this pattern have been known to elicit show-stopping awe and wonder. There is a certain exactness that is required to make any of these fantastic designs.



Palm



Waved Palm



Octopus

Swirled



Chrysanthemum



Chevron patterns generally require careful and deliberate movements. Take your time!

Palm

It's pretty obvious why this pattern was named Palm, as it looks a lot like the leaves of a palm tree. I chose fun colors that remind me of long summer days.



TOOLS NEEDED:

- Carrageenan bath
- Newspaper or scrap paper
- Paint
- Eyedroppers
- 1" (2.54cm) marbling comb (or a stylus)
- ½" (1.27cm) marbling comb (or a stylus)
- 3" (7.62cm) marbling comb
- Alumed paper
- Rinse board

DIRECTIONS

1. Begin by skimming the surface of the tank. Lay down your background colors with the “spine” method.



2. Apply five to seven layers of color.



3. Make a chevron with the 1" (2.54cm) and ½" (1.27cm) combs.



4. Pick up the 3" (7.62cm) comb, move to other side of the tank, and run the comb from north to south. Lay the paper down, pull up, rinse, and hang to dry.



Waved Palm

By giving the Palm pattern (page) a little bit of a wave, this one really does look like palm trees swaying in the wind. The contrast between the black, coral, and white colors really manage make your eyes want to follow all the curvy lines.



TOOLS NEEDED:

- Carrageenan bath
- Newspaper or scrap paper
- Paint
- Eyedroppers
- 1" (2.54cm) marbling comb (or a stylus)
- ½" (1.27cm) marbling comb (or a stylus)
- 2" (5.08cm) marbling comb
- Alumed paper
- Rinse board

DIRECTIONS

1. Begin by skimming the surface of the tank. Lay down your background colors with the “spine” method.



2. Apply five to seven layers of color.



3. Make a chevron with the 1" (2.54cm) and ½" (1.27cm) combs.



4. Change to the 2" (5.08cm) comb, move to other side of the tank, and push the comb away from you. On the return pass, gently move the comb in an "S" motion.



5. Lay the paper down, pull up, rinse, and hang to dry.

5



Octopus

When I saw all of the curvy lines of this finished pattern, I knew there was no better choice than to name it after the beautiful, intelligent octopus. The way the green, blue, and charcoal colors tumble over one another feels very nautical.



TOOLS NEEDED:

- Carrageenan bath
- Newspaper or scrap paper
- Paint
- Eyedroppers
- 1" (2.54cm) marbling comb (or a stylus)
- ½" (1.27cm) marbling comb (or a stylus)
- 3" (7.62cm) marbling comb
- Alumed paper
- Rinse board

DIRECTIONS

1. Begin by skimming the surface of the tank. Lay down your background colors with the “spine” method.



2. Apply five to seven layers of color.



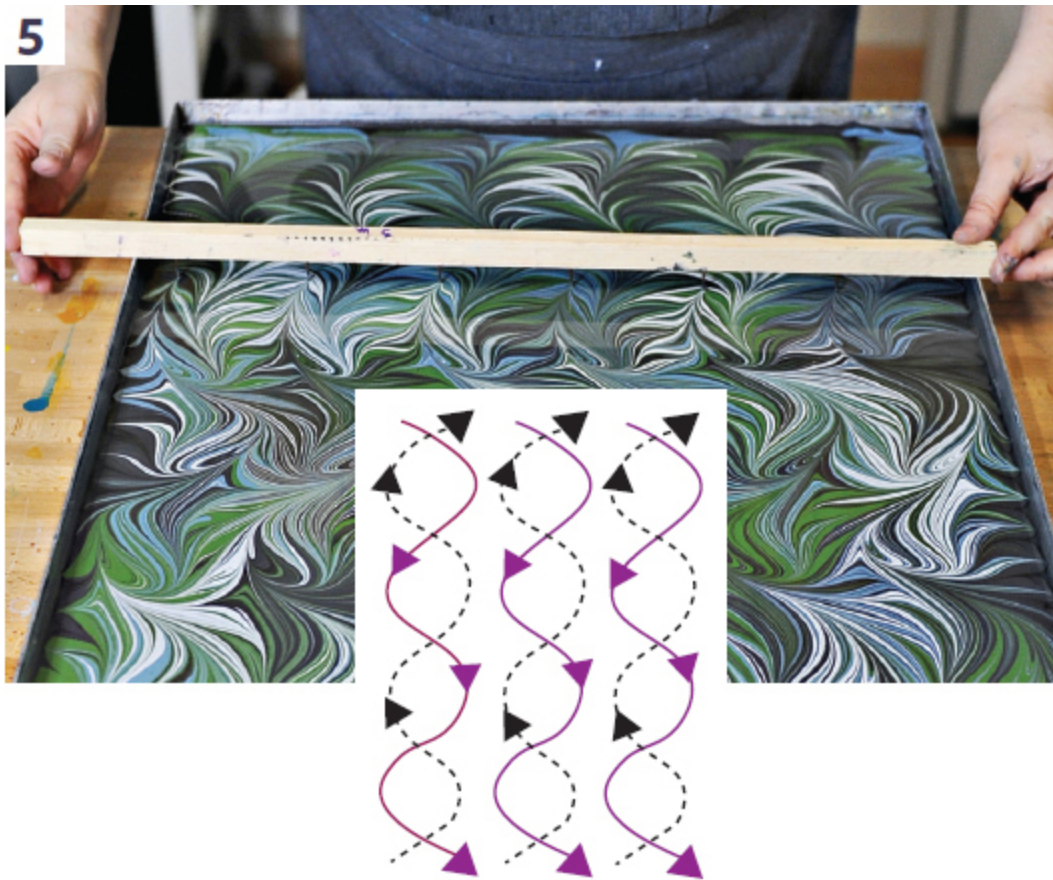
3. Make a chevron with the 1" (2.54cm) and ½" (1.27cm) combs.



4. Wave the 3" (7.62cm) comb from left to right in an "S" motion.



5. When you reach the other side, bisect the “S” shapes made in step 4 with a similar “S” motion.



6. Lay the paper down, pull up, rinse, and hang to dry.

6



Swirled Chrysanthemum

I originally learned of this pattern from Steve Pittelkow. I've since put my own little twist on it. I keep thinking this would make very nice wallpaper. I liked the combination of a bright, sunny yellow and sky blue to match the floral theme.

This pattern requires counting lines, so be sure you focus and take your time.



TOOLS NEEDED:

- Carrageenan bath
- Newspaper or scrap paper
- Paint
- Eyedroppers
- 1" (2.54cm) marbling comb (or a stylus)
- ½" (1.27cm) marbling comb (or a stylus)
- 2" (5.08cm) marbling comb
- Alumed paper
- Rinse board

DIRECTIONS

1. Begin by skimming the surface of the tank. Lay down your background colors with the “spine” method.



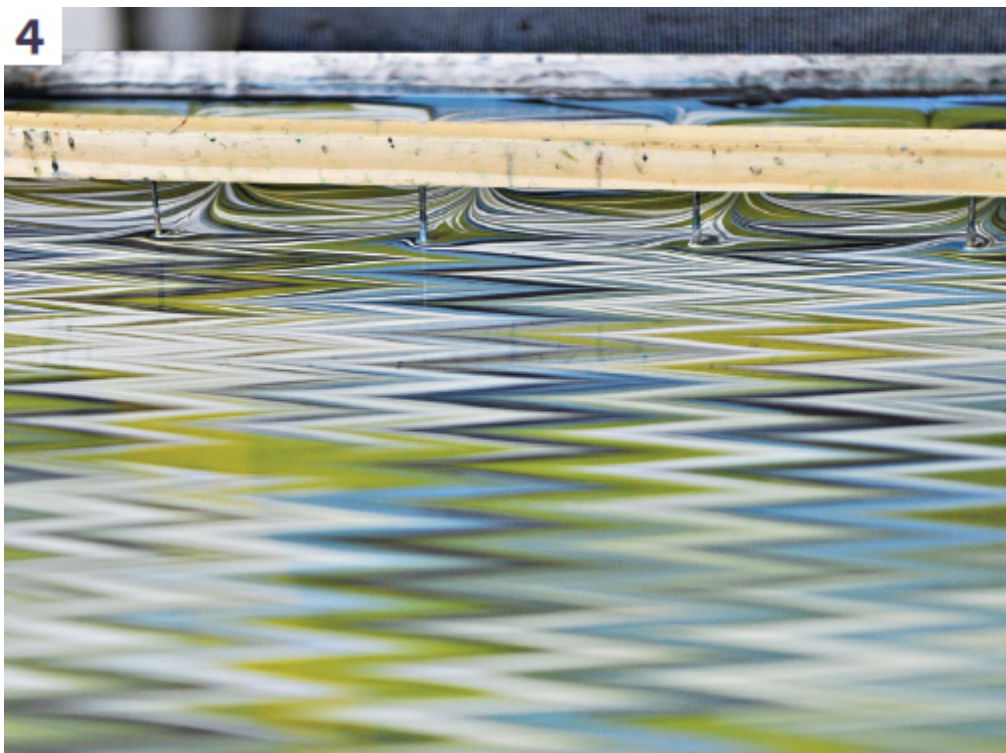
2. Apply five to seven layers of color.



3. Make a chevron with the 1" (2.54cm) and ½" (1.27cm) combs.



4. Take the 2" (5.08cm) comb and move it in three lines across the chevron. When you reach the third line, make a small clockwise motion. Remove the comb.



5. Count three lines from away from where you pulled the comb out. Place it back in and pull it toward you. Once you reach the swirl you made in step 2, make a similar clockwise motion. Remove the comb.



6. Repeat until the pattern fills the tray.



7. Lay the paper down, pull up, rinse, and hang to dry.



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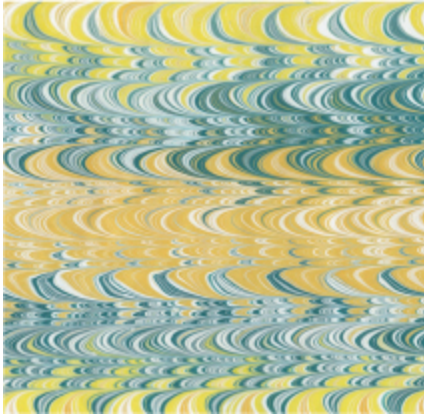
6: Italian Sisters Comb Patterns

This comb was first talked about by Josef Halfer, author of *The Progress of the Marbling Art* (1894), but has never formally appeared in any recent marbling publications. I am super happy to reintroduce this comb and its pattern combinations into the world. I must give a special thank you to Dan and Regina St. John for handing me this comb during a workshop at Cat Tail Run Bookbindery in Winchester, VA. Dan told me to figure out what to do with it. I had so much fun playing around and discovering its potential that I have not put it down since.



The Italian Sisters comb was first discussed in Josef Halfer's 1894 book entitled *The Progress of the Marbling Art*.

The Italian Sisters



The Sea Vine



The Waved Sea Vine

The Lorraine





Thanks to marblers Dan and Regina St. John of Chena River Marblers for giving me the chance to make beautiful patterns with the Italian Sisters comb.

The Italian Sisters

By choosing bright, contrasting colors, I decided to give this traditional comb's pattern a modern feel. I especially love the variation between large and small curves in the design, which really demonstrates how unique this comb is. The Italian Sisters comb is essentially a nonpareil comb with $\frac{1}{2}$ " (1.27cm) in between each grouping of four pins. See the step 3 photograph on page.



TOOLS NEEDED:

- Carrageenan bath
- Newspaper or scrap paper
- Paint
- Eyedroppers
- 1" (2.54cm) marbling comb (or stylus)
- Italian Sisters marbling comb
- Alumed paper
- Rinse board

DIRECTIONS

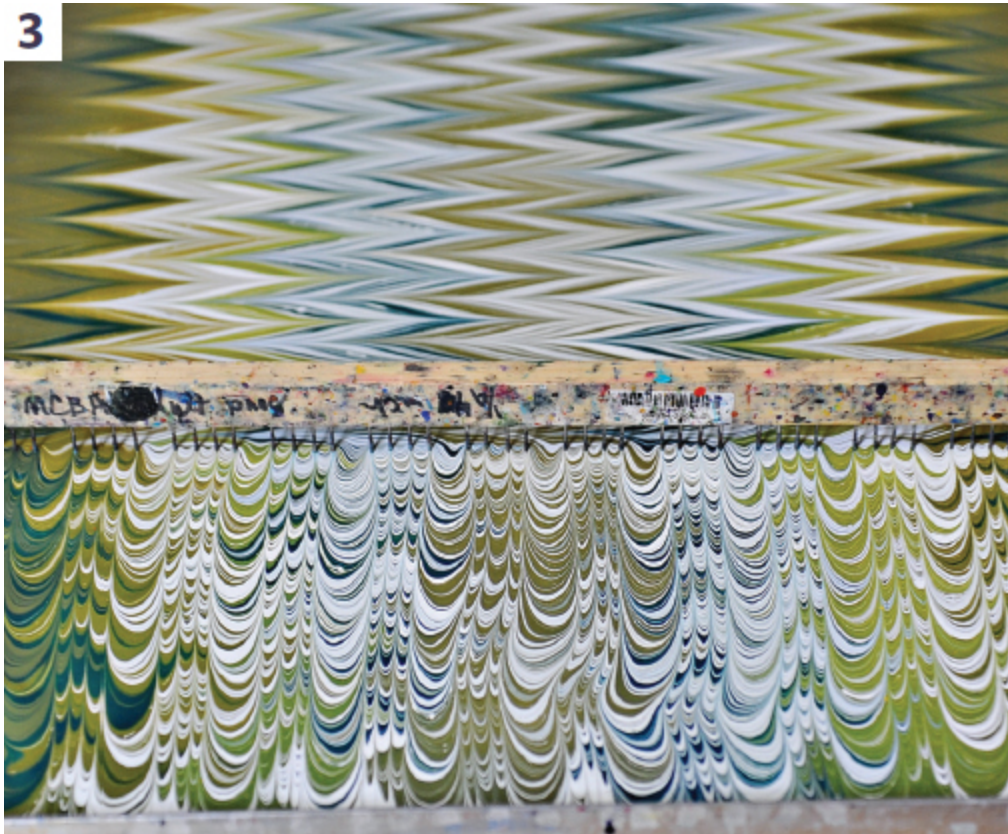
1. Begin by skimming the surface of the tank. Lay down your background colors with the “spine” method.



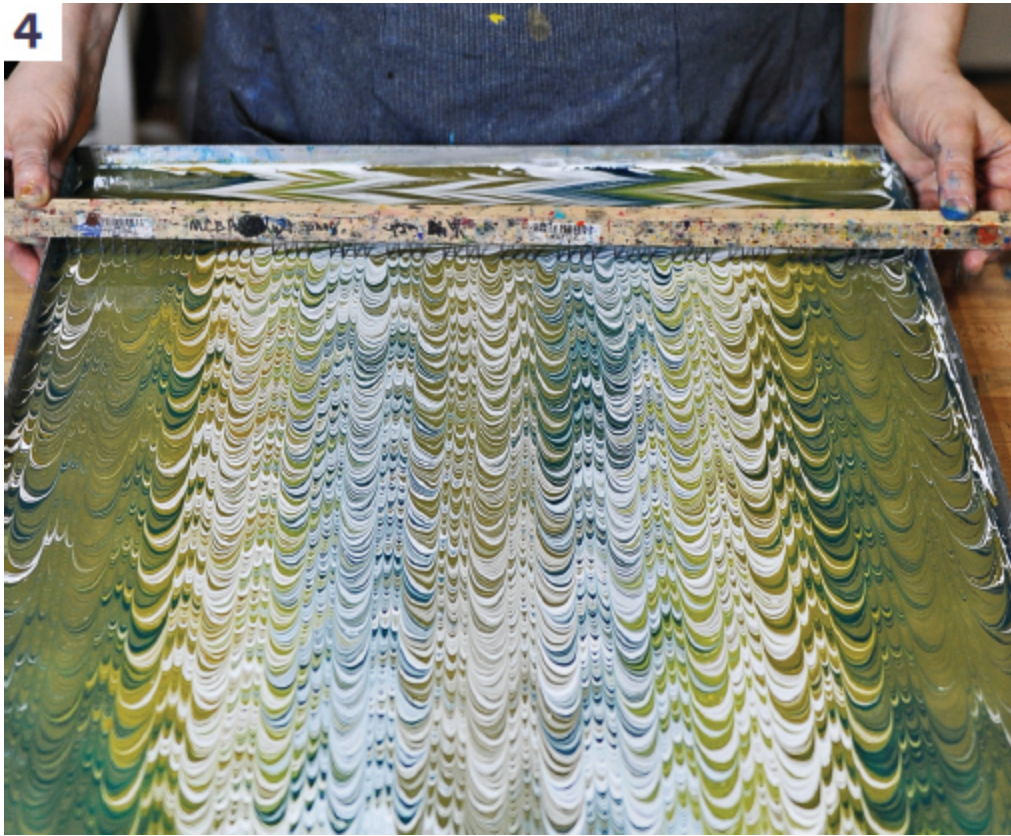
2. Apply five to seven layers of color.



3. Make a getgel with the 1" (2.54cm) comb.



4. Change to the Italian Sisters comb and pull it toward you as if you were making a nonpareil.



5. Lay the paper down, pull up, rinse, and hang to dry.



The Sea Vine

This wonderfully beautiful pattern looks like a tangle of sea vines in the ocean, and the tranquil blues and greens only boosts the visual connection from the design to the real deal.

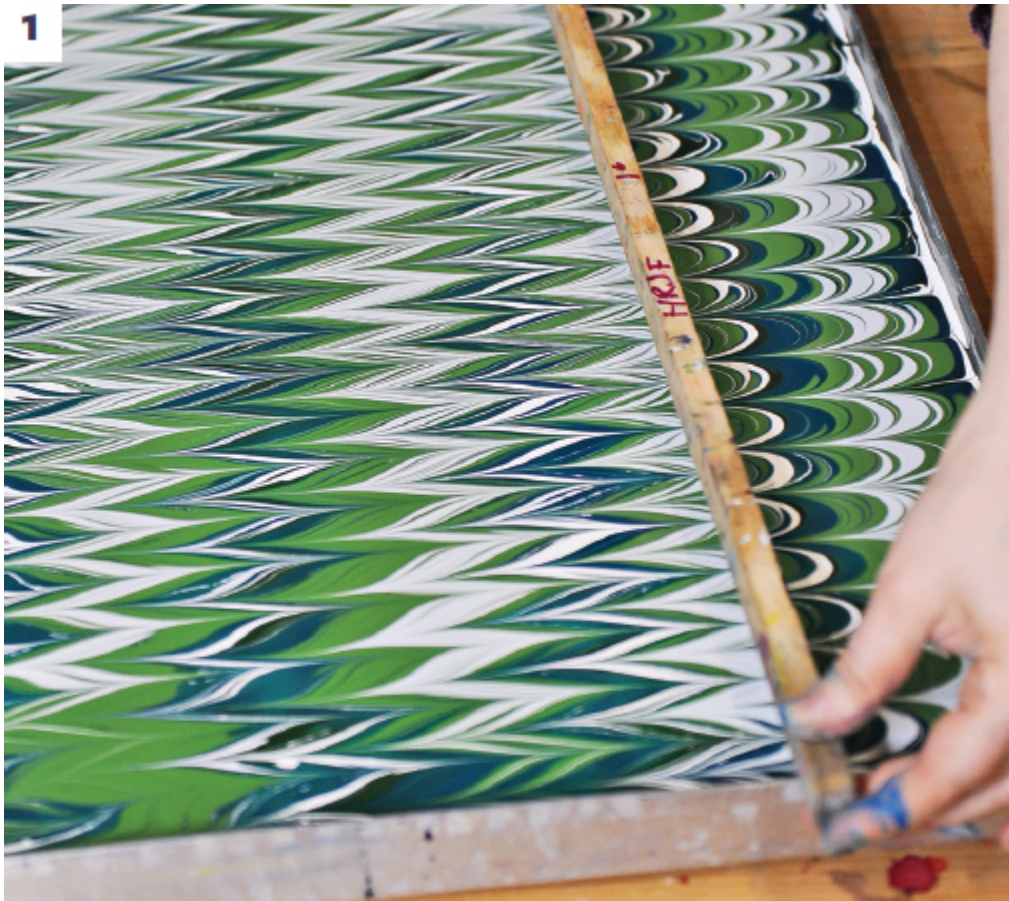


TOOLS NEEDED:

- Carrageenan bath
- Newspaper or scrap paper
- Paint
- Eyedroppers
- 1" (2.54cm) marbling comb (or a stylus)
- Italian Sisters marbling comb
- 2" (5.08cm) marbling comb
- Alumed paper
- Rinse board

DIRECTIONS

1. Begin by skimming the surface of the tank. Lay down your background colors with the "spine" method. Apply five to seven layers of color. Make a getgel with the 1" (2.54cm) comb.



2. Change to the Italian Sisters comb and pull it toward you as if you were making a nonpareil.



3. Move to the other side of the tank and pull the 2" (5.08cm) comb from east to west.



4. Lay the paper down, pull up, rinse, and hang to dry.

4



The Waved Sea Vine

I really love how this fun and funky pattern came out in the end. By just adding a little wave at the end of The Sea Vine pattern (page) and choosing bright, brassy colors, you get a much louder design.



TOOLS NEEDED:

- Carrageenan bath
- Newspaper or scrap paper
- Paint
- Eyedroppers
- 1" (2.54cm) marbling comb (or a stylus)
- Italian Sisters marbling comb
- 2" (5.08cm) marbling comb
- Alumed paper
- Rinse board

DIRECTIONS

1. Begin by skimming the surface of the tank. Lay down your background colors with the “spine” method.



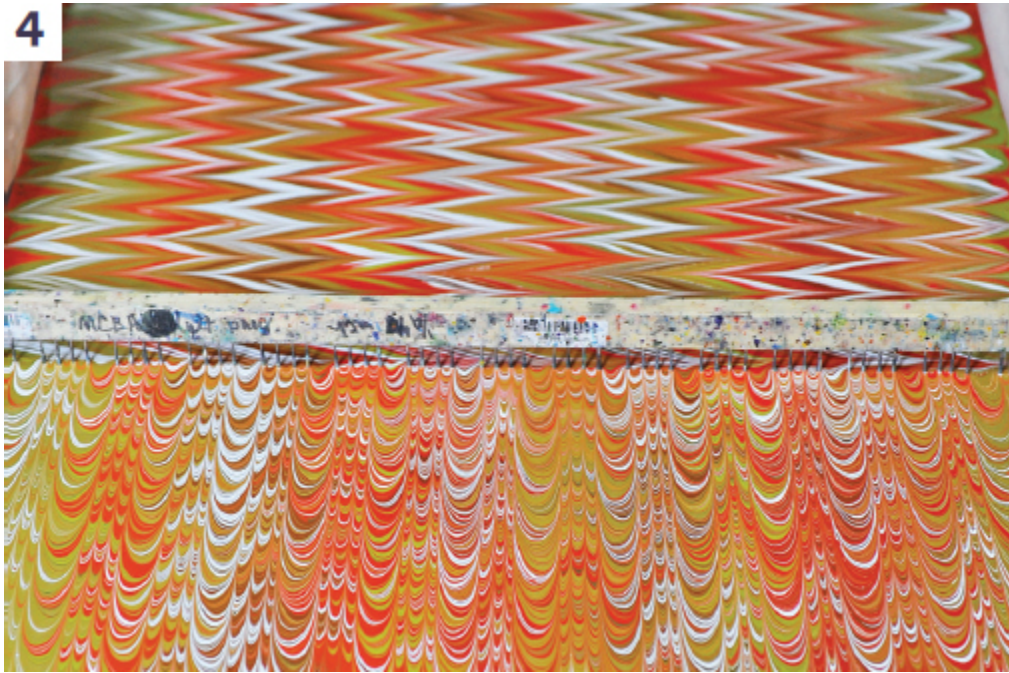
2. Apply five to seven layers of color.



3. Make a getgel with the 1" (2.54cm) comb.



4. Change to the Italian Sisters comb and pull it toward you as if you were making a nonpareil.



5. With the 2" (5.08cm) comb, move to the other side of the tank and pull it from east to west. Still using the 2" (5.08cm) comb, wave the comb back in a west to east direction.



6. Lay the paper down, pull up, rinse, and hang to dry.



The Lorraine

By choosing a limited palette of colors and applying them to the bath on an angle, the delicacy of the pastel colors was a perfect match to this curvy, light pattern's design. This would be a great design to use to wrap around a baby shower gift.



TOOLS NEEDED:

- Carrageenan bath
- Newspaper or scrap paper
- Paint
- Eyedroppers
- 1" (2.54cm) marbling comb (or a stylus)
- Italian Sisters marbling comb
- 2" (5.08cm) marbling comb
- Alumed paper
- Rinse board

DIRECTIONS

1. Begin by skimming the surface of the tank. Lay down your background colors on an angle with the "spine" method.



2. Apply five to seven layers of color.



3. Make a getgel with the 1" (2.54cm) comb.



4. Change to the Italian Sisters comb and pull it toward you as if you were making a nonpareil.



5. With the 2" (5.08cm) comb, go over the last pass you made with the Italian Sisters comb in step 4.



6. Move to the other side of the vat. Use the 2" (5.08cm) comb to move west to east.



7. Lay the paper down, pull up, rinse, and hang to dry.



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7: Three Muses Comb Patterns

The Three Muses marbling comb was written about in marbling books published in the late 1800s; however, not much has been written about it since then. Once again, I owe a debt of gratitude to Dan and Regina St. John. Dan introduced me to the comb at a workshop. I began rediscovering patterns that may have existed centuries ago. The following patterns are refreshingly modern, especially when using bright-colored acrylics. I hope you enjoy them as much as I do!

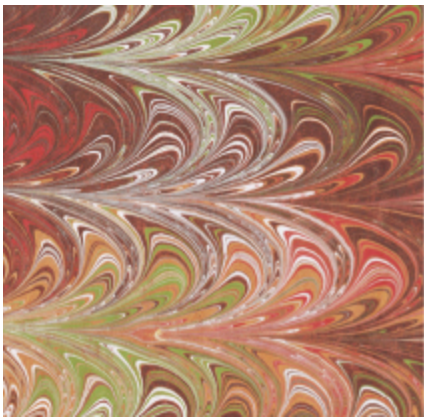


The Three Muses comb is a long forgotten comb that I was pleased to use to rediscover centuries-old patterns.

The Three Muses



The Waved Muse Vine



The Felce Muse

Oscillating Muse



Plume Muse



I love the Three Muses comb because it's the perfect tool to blend centuries-old patterns with modern colors.

The Three Muses

The soft and bright colors combine nicely with the gentle curves to give this pattern a very lofty look. The arrangement reminds of the famous three goddesses of inspiration from Greek mythology.



TOOLS NEEDED:

- Carrageenan bath
- Newspaper or scrap paper
- Paint
- Eyedroppers
- 1" (2.54cm) marbling comb (or a stylus)
- Three Muses marbling comb
- Alumed paper
- Rinse board

DIRECTIONS

1. Begin by skimming the surface of the tank. Lay down your background colors with the “spine” method.



2. Apply five to seven layers of color.



3. Make a getgel with the 1" (2.54cm) comb.



4. Change to the Three Muses comb and pull it toward you as if you were making a nonpareil.



5. Lay the paper down, pull up, rinse, and hang to dry.



The Waved Muse Vine

By bisecting the Three Muses pattern (page), this wavy design has a totally different look. I love how the colors curl around one another and fan out like a curvy vine.



TOOLS NEEDED:

- Carrageenan bath
- Newspaper or scrap paper
- Paint
- Eyedroppers
- 1" (2.54cm) marbling comb (or a stylus)
- Three Muses marbling comb
- 2" (5.08cm) marbling comb
- Alumed paper
- Rinse board

DIRECTIONS

1. Begin by skimming the surface of the tank. Lay down your background colors with the “spine” method.



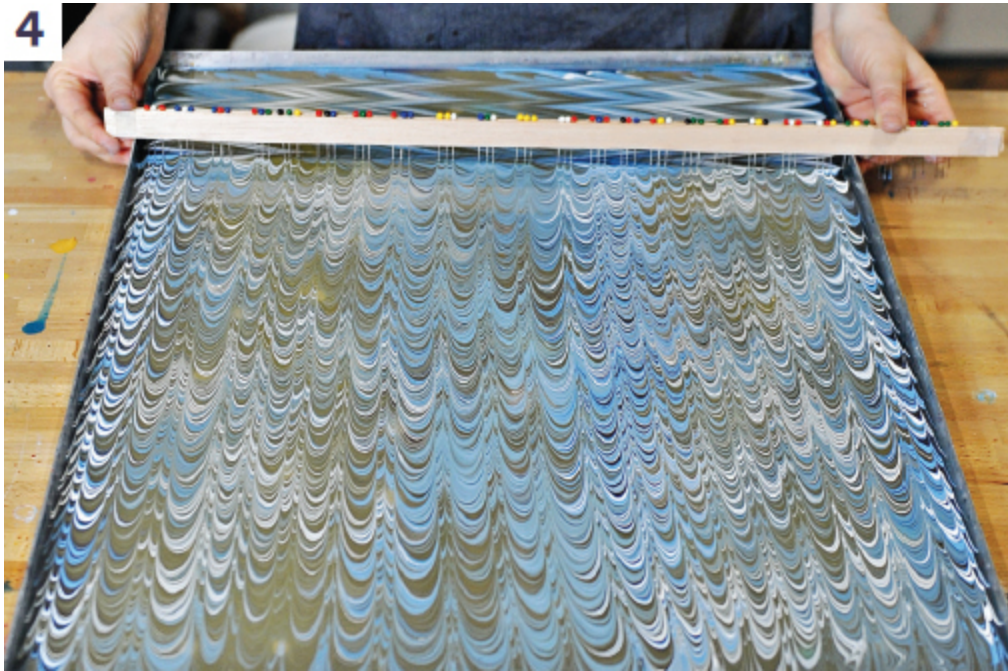
2. Apply five to seven layers of color.



3. Make a getgel with the 1" (2.54cm) comb.



4. Change to the Three Muses comb and pull it toward you as if you were making a nonpareil.



5. With the 2" (5.08cm) comb, move to the other side of the tank and pull it from east to west. Then wave the comb back in a west to east direction.



6. Lay the paper down, pull up, rinse, and hang to dry.



The Felce Muse

In Italian, the word *felce* refers to a delicate, feathery fern. This is the perfect name for this pattern because of how the deep-colored curves trail out in this plummy design.



TOOLS NEEDED:

- Carrageenan bath
- Newspaper or scrap paper
- Paint
- Eyedroppers
- 1" (2.54cm) marbling comb (or a stylus)
- Three Muses marbling comb
- 2" (5.08cm) marbling comb
- Alumed paper
- Rinse board

DIRECTIONS

1. Begin by skimming the surface of the tank. Lay down your background colors with the “spine” method.



2. Apply five to seven layers of color.



3. Make a getgel with the 1" (2.54cm) comb.



4. Change to the Three Muses comb and pull it toward you as if you were making a nonpareil.



5. With the 2" (5.08cm) comb, move to the other side of the tank and pull it from east to west in a waving motion. Then wave the comb back in a west to east direction.



6. Lay the paper down, pull up, rinse, and hang to dry.

6



Oscillating Muse

The deep, sharp slants in this pattern are what give the design its name. The mixture of the light colors against the dark black bring the peaked pattern to the forefront.

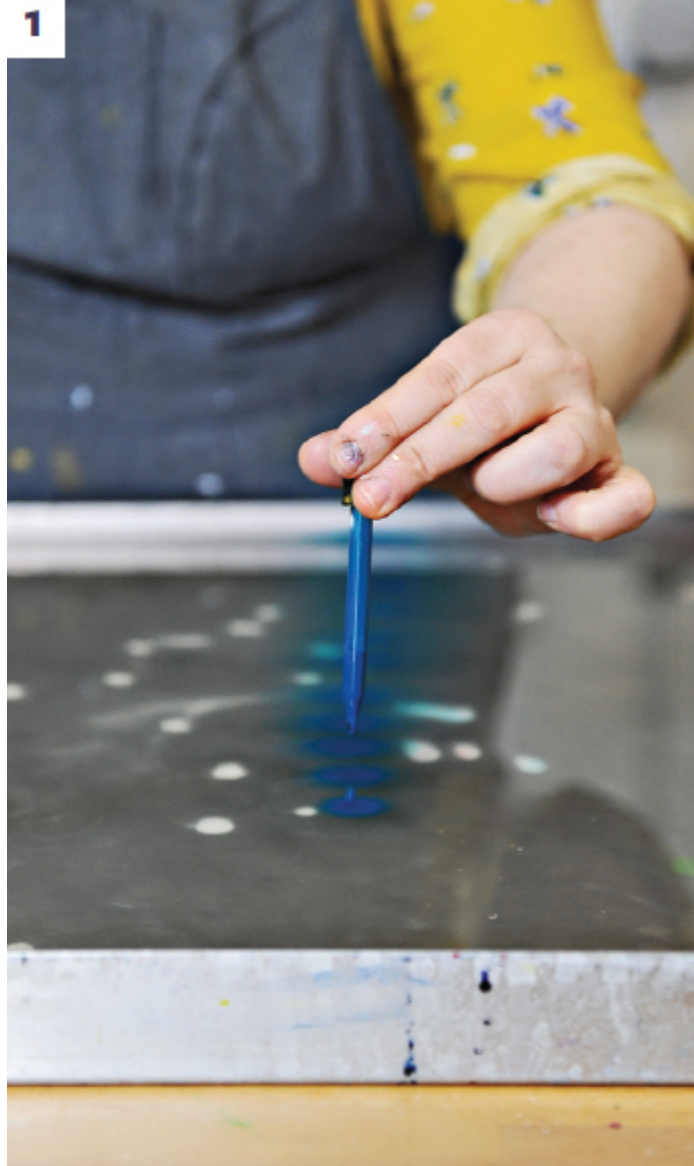


TOOLS NEEDED:

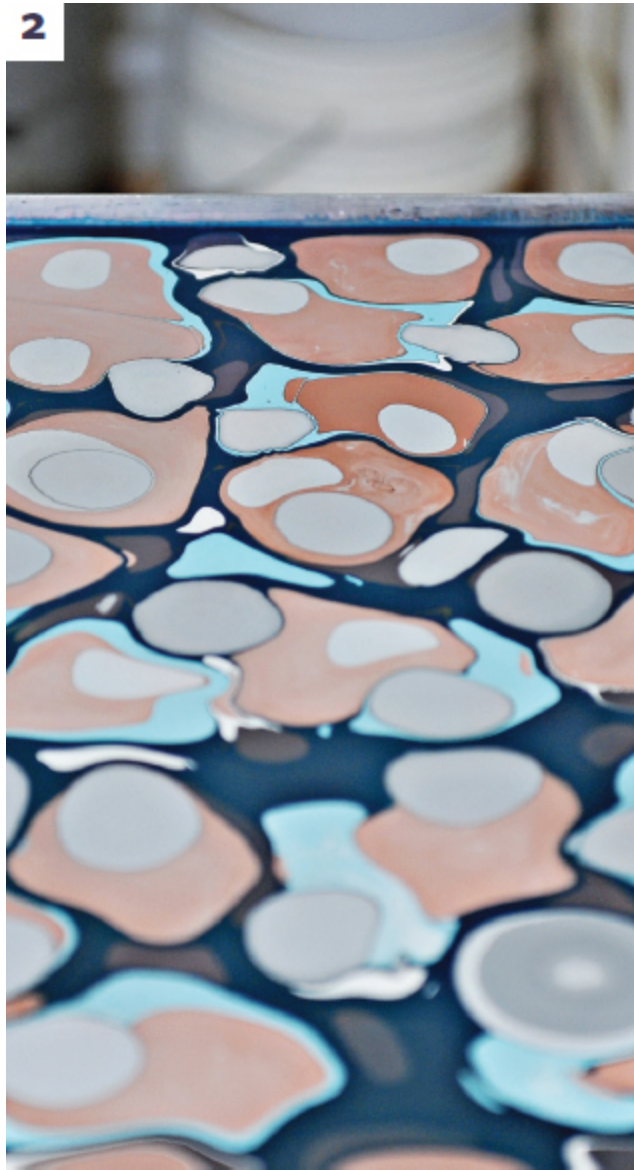
- Carrageenan bath
- Newspaper or scrap paper
- Paint
- Eyedroppers
- 1" (2.54cm) marbling comb (or a stylus)
- Three Muses marbling comb
- 2" (5.08cm) marbling comb
- Alumed paper
- Rinse board

DIRECTIONS

1. Begin by skimming the surface of the tank. Lay down your background colors with the “spine” method.



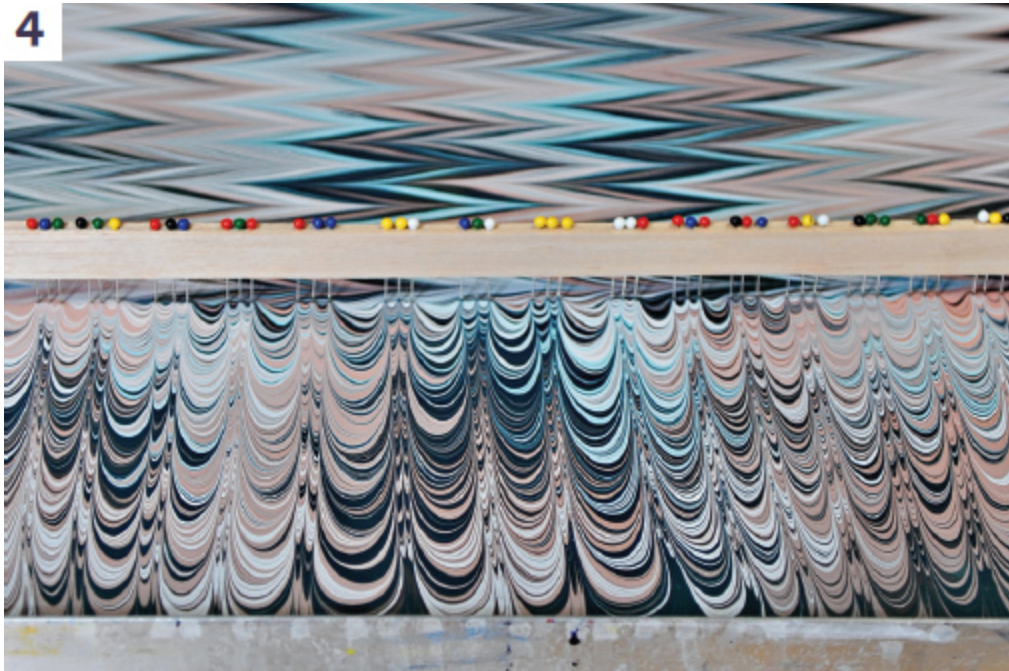
2. Apply five to seven layers of color.



3. Make a getgel with the 1" (2.54cm) comb.



4. Change to the Three Muses comb and pull it toward you as if you were making a nonpareil.



5. With the 2" (5.08cm) comb, move to the other side of the tank and pull it from east to west in a waving motion. Then wave the comb back in a west to east direction.



6. Lay the paper down, pull up, rinse, and hang to dry.

6



Plume Muse

The design in this pattern reminds me of the large decorative plume feathers from a bird, hence its name. I chose to use a pink palette to give the piece a cheery tone.



TOOLS NEEDED:

- Carrageenan bath
- Newspaper or scrap paper
- Paint
- Eyedroppers
- 1" (2.54cm) marbling comb (or a stylus)
- Three Muses marbling comb
- 2" (5.08cm) marbling comb
- Alumed paper
- Rinse board

DIRECTIONS

1. Begin by skimming the surface of the tank. Lay down your background colors with the “spine” method.



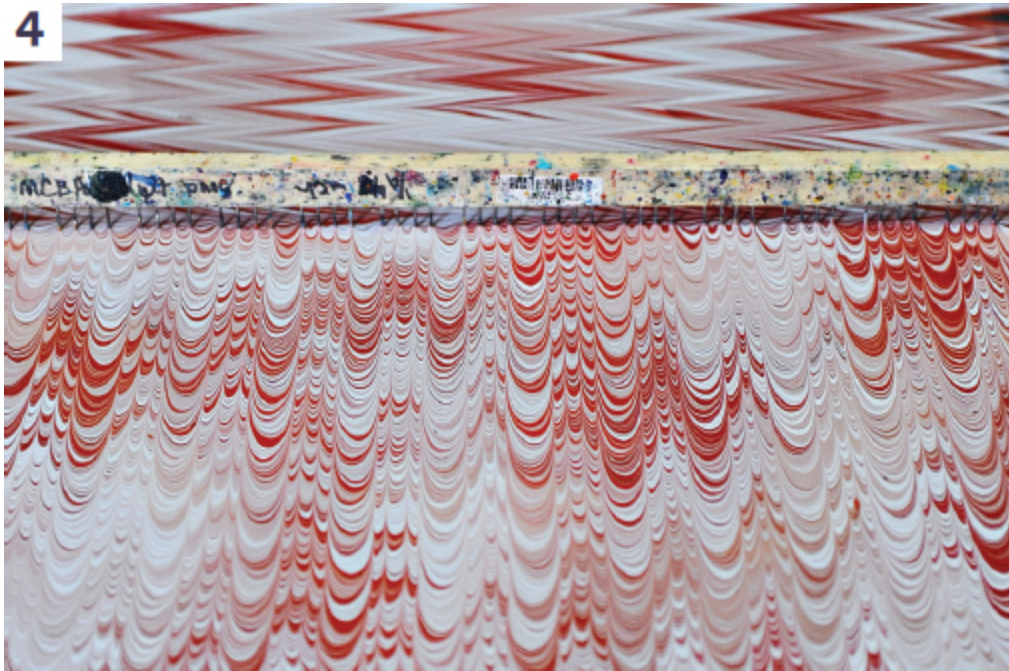
2. Apply five to seven layers of color.



3. Make a getgel with the 1" (2.54cm) comb.



4. Change to the Three Muses comb and pull it toward you as if you were making a nonpareil.



5. With the 2" (5.08cm) comb, move to the other side of the tank, pulling the comb from east to west in a straight line.



6. Lay the paper down, pull up, rinse, and hang to dry.



PART III: PROJECTS



8: Marbling on Fabric



9: Projects with Marbled Paper



Bunting & Gift Wrap

Decorated Décor



Drawer Liner



Bookshelf Liners

**Framed Marbled
Paper**



**Marbled Paper as a
Mat Board**



When in doubt of whether or not a fabric can be marbled, purchase a small sample to test. Silk and PFD (prepared-for-dyeing) fabrics are your best options; unfortunately, linens will not work. The fabric I marbled here was used to make a round pillow.

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8: Marbling on Fabric

Marbling fabrics is one of my favorite things to do. The major difference between paper and fabric is the prep of the material. It's a little more complicated, but has a huge payoff in the end. Mastering this technique will open up your world of possibilities.



Materials for Marbling Fabric

- ☐ 1 yd. (0.91m) of prepared-for-dyeing (PFD) cotton or ½ yd. (45.72cm) of silk or other fabric (cotton, old bed sheets, different-colored fabric, polyester, rayon)
- ☐ 8 oz. (0.18L) bottle of Synthrapol
- ☐ 1 lb. of alum (see page)
- ☐ Wooden spoon
- ☐ Rubber gloves
- ☐ Mask and protective eyewear
- ☐ Acrylic paints (Golden Fluid Acrylics or equivalent)
- ☐ Carrageenan
- ☐ Blender
- ☐ Drying rack (clothesline, shower rod, etc.)
- ☐ Iron and ironing board
- ☐ Large plastic bucket
- ☐ 1-gal. (4L) resealable plastic bag
- ☐ Marbling vat
- ☐ Marbling tools (combs, stylus, whisks, etc.)
- ☐ Eyedroppers
- ☐ Paint cups
- ☐ Mailing tube or PVC pipe

Recipes

Washing Fabric

One capful of Synthrapol to 1 yd. (0.91m) of fabric.

Alum for Fabric

Use ½ cup (120mL) of alum to every 1 gal. (3.79L) warm water. Dissolve the alum crystals with a wooden spoon in the warm water. Be sure to wear gloves, a mask, and protective eyewear when mixing large quantities of alum.

Paint

Mix 1 tablespoon of paint to 3 tablespoons of water.

Carrageenan

With a blender, mix 2 tablespoons carrageenan per 1 gal. (3.79L) water. Do this at least 3 hours in advance to give the bubbles time to dissipate.

Fabric Prep

Wash your fabric with a capful of Synthrapol in your washing machine.

Wash only 1 yd. (0.91m) of fabric at a time. Dry your fabric in your clothes dryer (EXCEPT for silk; you should line-dry silk). Use an iron if the fabric is wrinkled.

In a large plastic bucket, dissolve cup (120mL) of alum in 1 gal. (3.79L) of warm water. Once the fabric is completely dry, place it into the alum. Push it down with a wooden spoon until the fabric is completely saturated and soak for 20 minutes.





Remove the fabric and squeeze out any excess water/alum. Hang it on a drying rack (or clothesline, shower rod, etc.). Important: Do *not* put alumed fabric in the dryer—it will rust the metal in your dryer. Allow the fabric to dry completely, then fold and store it in a 1-gal. (4-L) resealable plastic bag (if you're not using it immediately).

Marbling on Fabric

Before you marble fabric, you must press it out completely with a dry iron (*absolutely no steam*). Drop the paint into the bath and make the desired pattern. Refer to previous chapters for ideas on marbling patterns.

Laying Fabric

Have a partner hold each end of fabric as you slowly lower the fabric onto the tank, working from the center outward. Although the paper-laying technique is more difficult when applied to fabric, it can be used when working alone. Since paper isn't as stiff as paper, use a mailing tube or PVC pipe to roll the fabric down.

When you remove your fabric from the bath, gently place it in a nearby bucket filled with tap water, rinse, and hang your fabric on a clothesline to dry. Once the fabric is dry, iron it. Let the fabric stand for five days to allow the colors to set. Gently hand-wash fabrics in warm water with baby shampoo to remove the alum from the fabric. Hang to dry then iron again.



TIPS

- You can leave unused alumed fabric for 30 days before you need to wash them out. If you do this, wash them in Sythropol and dry them. You will have to re-alum the fabric if you decide to use them. It is best practice to run out of fabric and alum rather than to over-alum.
- Wear gloves when aluming.
- Some fabrics will marble well and other will not. Linens are problematic. (This makes me sad because I really wish linen worked!) PFD will work. If you are in doubt, purchase an ¼ yd. (11.43cm). Test it first before purchasing the correct yardage.





9: Projects with Marbled Paper

One of the biggest comments I get is, “I am not a bookbinder. What do I with my sheets of marbled paper?” This is a question I thought about for a long time. I’ve talked to my former students and other marblers I know. The following pages contain some of my favorite projects. Most of them can be done in a short period of time and for very little additional cost. These projects are a great way to get kids involved in marbling minor home décor items, party accessories, and small crafts.



Bunting & Gift Wrap

Add a bunting to a cake or a wall for a bit of extra flair to any party.

Matching gift wrap is another great way to make any occasion special. This next project is one of my personal favorites to do, because I generally have more marbled paper than I know what to do with.

TOOLS NEEDED:

- Marbled paper
- Bunting templates
- Paper clips
- Pencil
- Scissors or cutting mat and craft knife
- Metal ruler (optional)
- Twine
- Glue stick or double-sided tape
- Glitter letters (or markers)
- Paper straws (if going in cake)

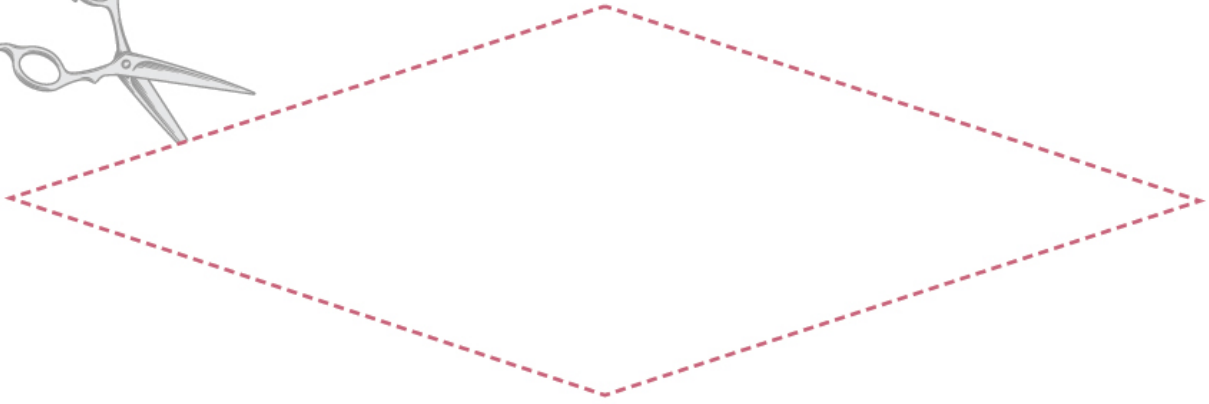
Directions

Fold the marbled paper in half. Place the template on the paper and secure with paper clips. Trace around the template lightly with a pencil. Cut out the bunting flags with scissors or a cutting mat and craft knife (use a metal ruler when cutting with the craft knife). Lie out your twine, then attach your flags with glue or double-sided tape. Place the glitter letters on the flags, or write out your message with markers and pretty lettering. Tie the bunting onto the paper straws. Put into the cake, and party!

I use my extra marbled sheets to wrap gifts for birthday and holiday gifts. It's fun to watch people carefully unwrap their gifts to save the paper. Sometimes, I find that friends and family like the paper more than the actual gift!



BUNTING TEMPLATES



Decorated Décor

Who doesn't like their initials? Decorated letters are a fun way to personalize a room or party. Adding marbled paper to any other item, like a notebook, is an excellent way to add variety and color to your décor. Whatever you choose, this activity is the perfect way to get everyone involved in a creative activity together.

TOOLS NEEDED:

- Marbled paper
- Cardboard letter (or other décor item)
- Pencil
- Scissors or cutting mat and craft knife
- Metal ruler (optional)
- Glue or double-sided tape

Directions

Place the marbled side of the paper facedown. Lightly trace the silhouette of the letter (or décor item) on the back with a pencil. Cut out your traced shapes from the marbled paper (use a metal ruler when cutting with the craft knife), glue or tape it onto the cardboard item, and add it to your décor!



Drawer Liner

I grew up antiquing and restoring furniture with my mom. One of the things we'd do was add decorative paper liners to the bottom of drawers to give the piece of furniture a bespoke touch.

TOOLS NEEDED:

- Measuring tape
- Marbled paper
- Metal ruler
- Pencil
- Cutting mat and craft knife
- Double-sided tape (optional)

Directions

Remove any items from the drawer and take it out of the piece of furniture. Measure the interior length and width with the measuring tape. Look at your paper and decide what the area you'd like to use. Turn it over so the blank side is facing up. Measure and draw out your length and width with the metal ruler. Then cut out your draw lines with the metal ruler, a cutting mat, and a craft knife. Remove the excess. Place a few strips of double-sided tape about ½" (1.27cm) from all four sides on the back of the paper (optional). Place the cut sheet in the drawer.



Bookshelf Liners

Are you tired of looking at dark bookshelves, or simply want to add some color into your space? This project is for you! A helpful tip: Stone or freestyle patterns generally work the best when doing a large area.

TOOLS NEEDED:

- Measuring tape
- Marbled paper
- Pencil
- Metal ruler
- Scissors or craft knife and cutting mat
- Double-sided tape or removable spray adhesive
- Mask and protective eyewear (optional)

Directions

Measure the interior of the shelves with a measuring tape. Figure out which areas on the marbled papers you'd like to use, then turn your paper over so the plain side is facing up. Draw out your measurements with the metal ruler and cut out with scissors or a cutting mat and craft knife. Place a few strips of double-sided tape about $\frac{1}{4}$ " (0.64cm) from all four sides, or use removable spray adhesive to spray the non-marbled side. (Note: If you use the spray adhesive, go outside to spray your project. Use a mask and protective eyewear and follow the manufacturer's instructions.) Adhere the marbled paper to your shelf.



Framed Marbled Paper

Framing your marbled sheets is a great way to decorate your space. I'd highly recommend matting and framing some of your pieces for a gallery wall in your home. Most art and craft stores will sell standard-size precut mats and frames. Turning your marbled paper into a piece of art is easy and cost effective.

TOOLS NEEDED:

- Frame
- Marbled paper
- Pencil
- Metal ruler
- Scissors or craft knife and cutting mat
- Mat (optional)

Directions

Find the section of your marble pattern that is the most visually interesting to you. Use a metal ruler and a pencil to measure and mark the correct dimensions of the frame. Cut out the marked section and mount it to the frame. If you will be using a mat board, remember to have that in place in front of the marbled paper before finishing your framing.



Marbled Paper as a Mat Board

I've ordered many inspirational printables from Etsy, only to find that I needed a little color behind the piece. One day, I got the idea of using a piece of marbled paper behind a printable. It gave the piece the additional pop of color that it needed. I highly recommend doing this for your printables or photos.

TOOLS NEEDED:

- Frame
- Printable art (or photo)
- Marbled paper
- Pencil
- Metal ruler
- Scissors or craft knife and cutting mat
- Double-sided tape

Directions

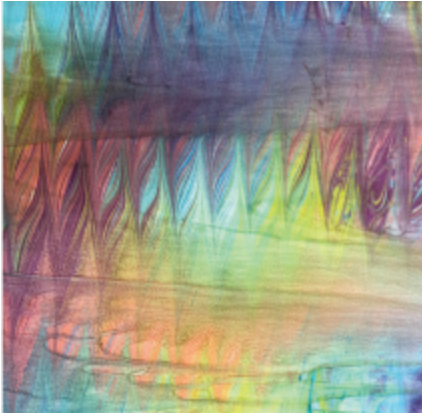
Make sure you have a frame large enough to show both the printable (or photo) and the marbled paper. Find the section of your marble pattern that you like the most. Use a metal ruler and a pencil to measure and mark the correct dimensions of the frame. Cut out the marked section and tape the printable (or photo) to the center. Mount the piece to the frame and hang to enjoy!



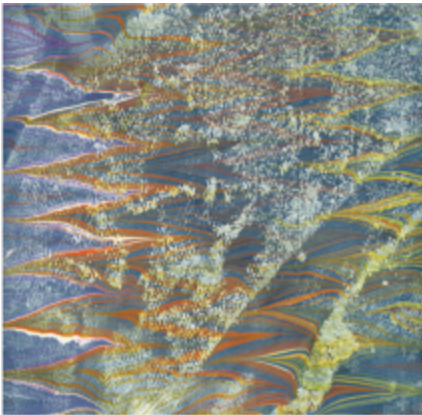
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PART IV: TROUBLESHOOTING

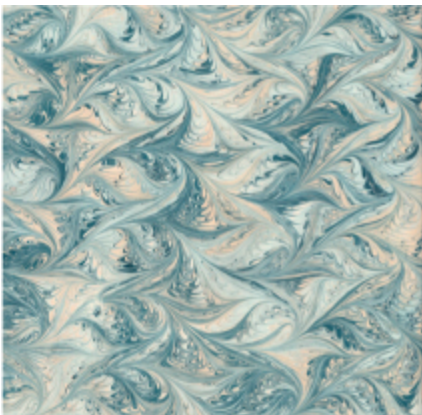
Here are some examples of some problems you may run into when marbling and how to fix them.



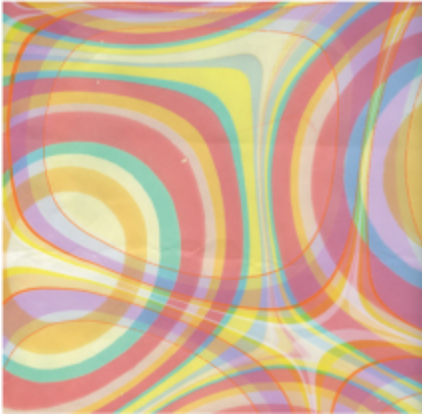
Paint Sliding off the Page



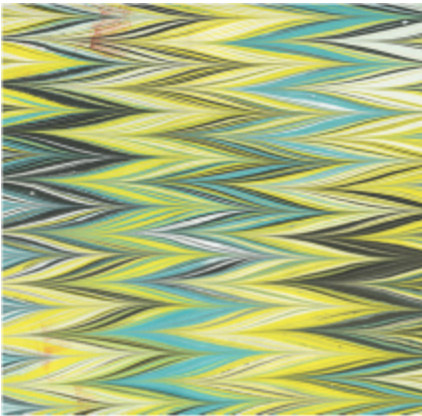
Alum Too Wet



Missed a Spot



Dust Spots



Too Much Paint



Sizing in the Paper

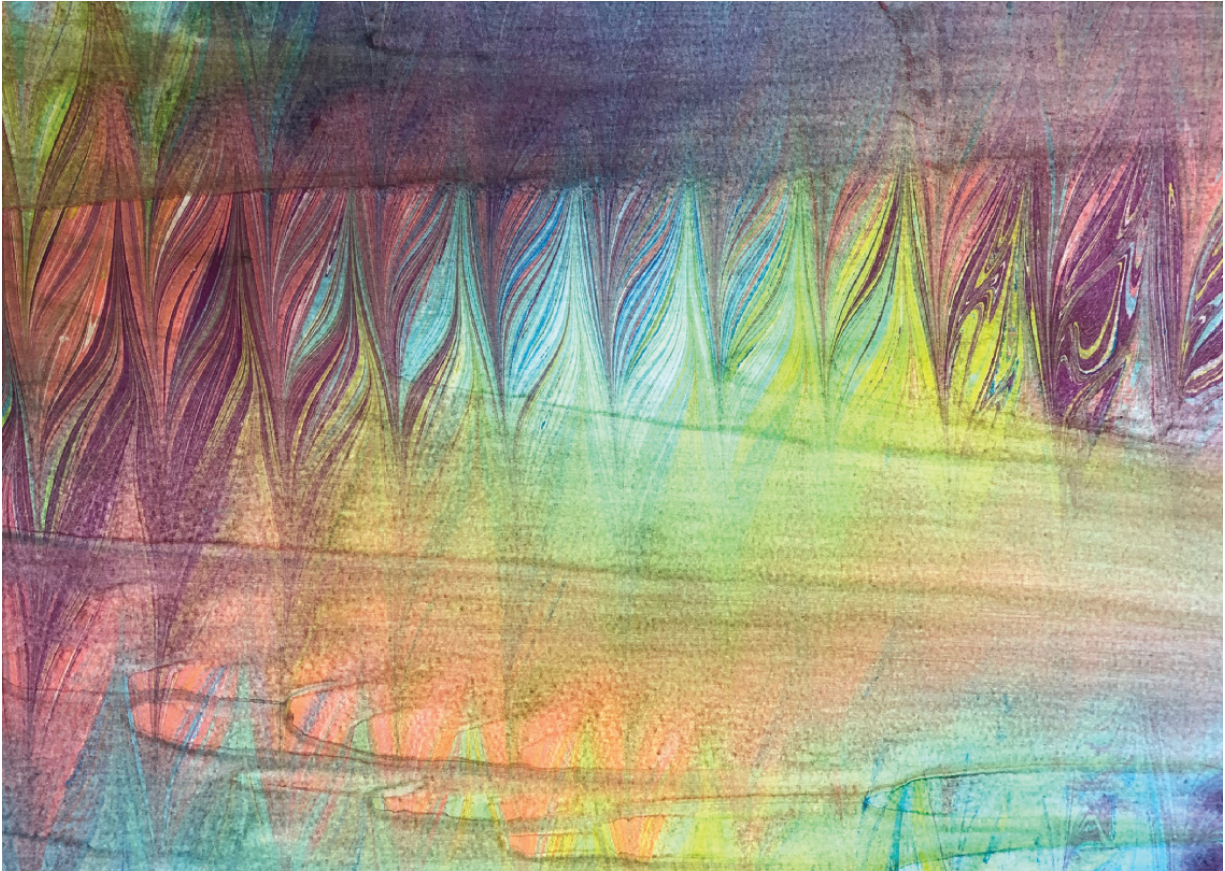
Paint Cracking





Dust spots are a difficult problem to overcome.

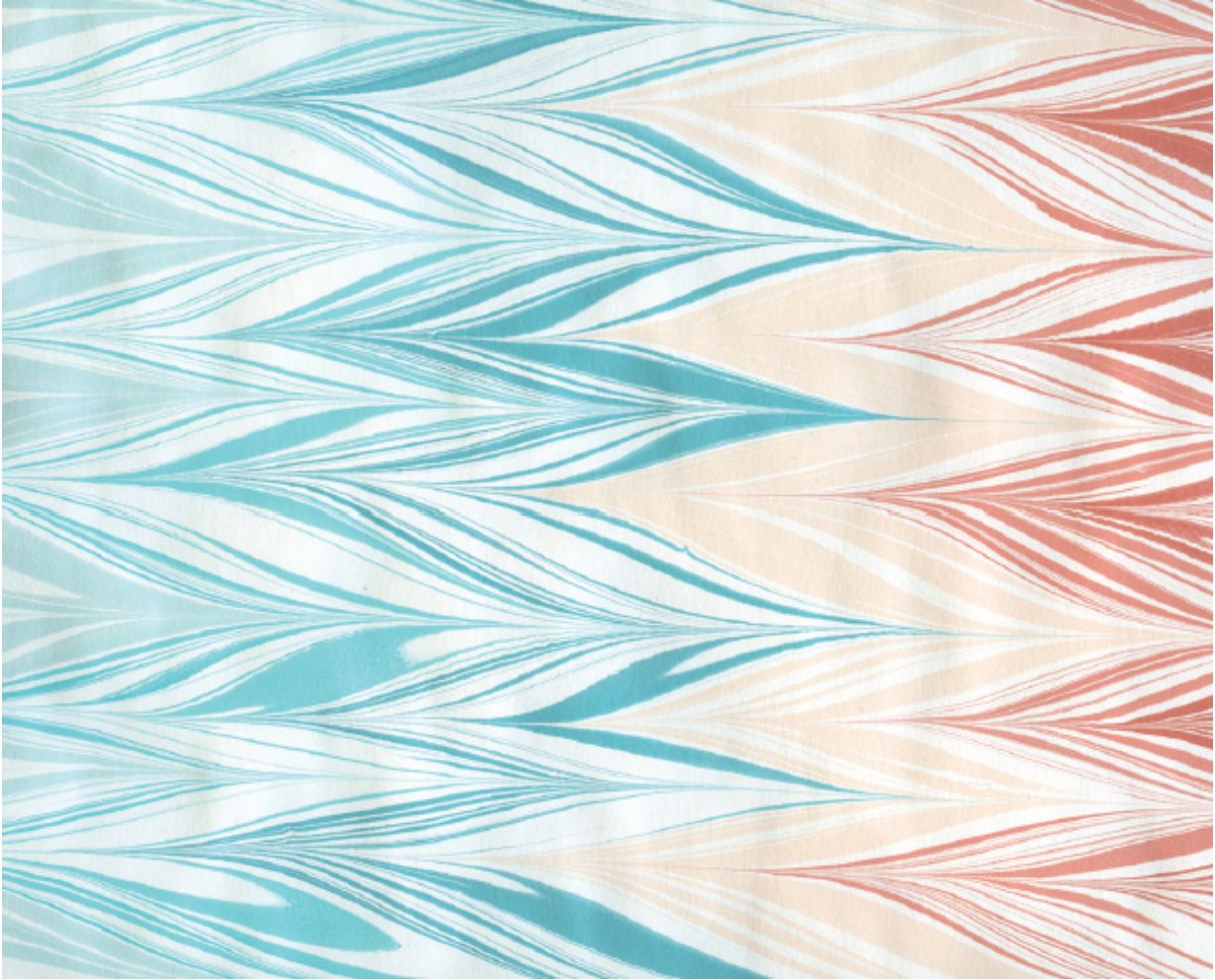
Paint Sliding off the Page



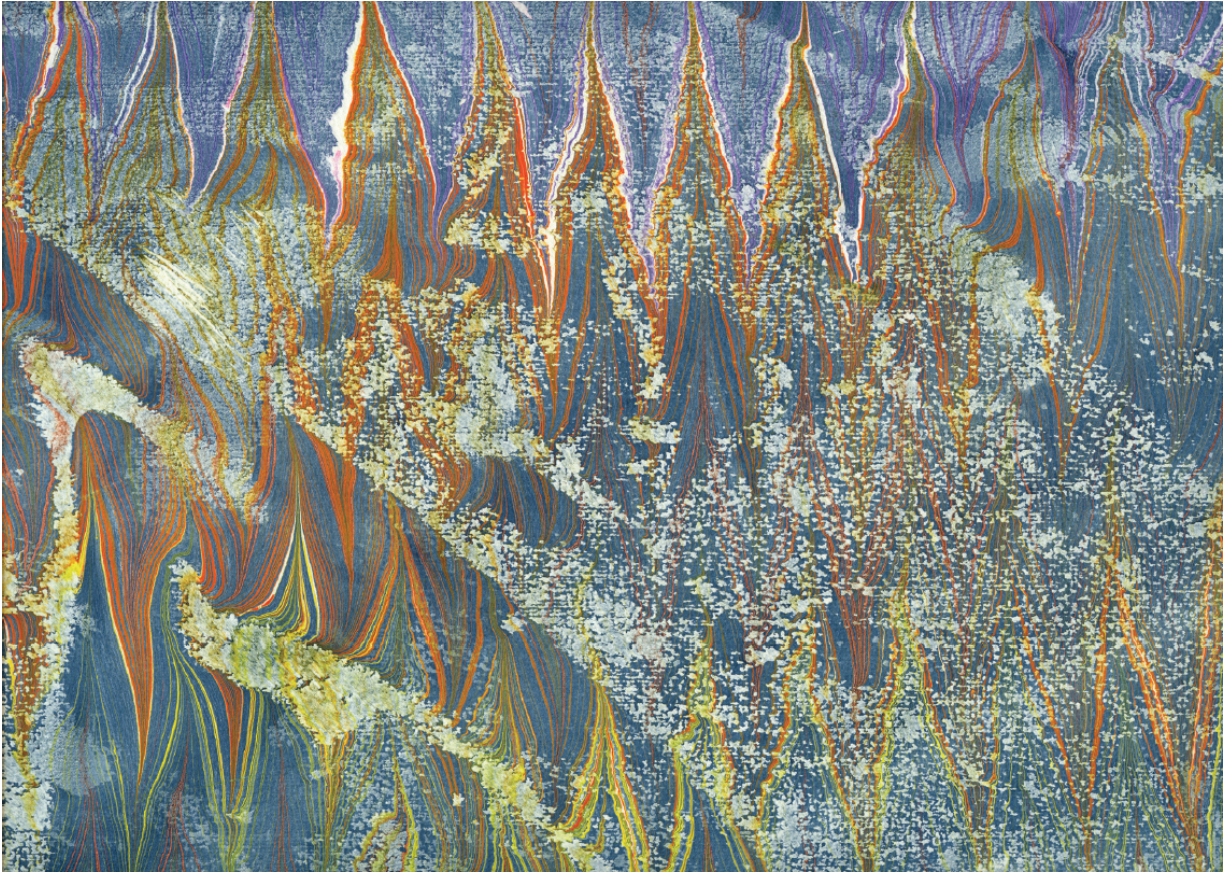
Problem: Large amounts of time go into the creation of each pattern. To have the paint slide off your page because you marbled the wrong side or haven't applied enough alum is heartbreaking.



Solution: Always apply alum carefully to ensure that you've covered the whole page evenly (see page). Also, slow down and double check that your name is toward the ceiling as you are laying your paper in the vat.



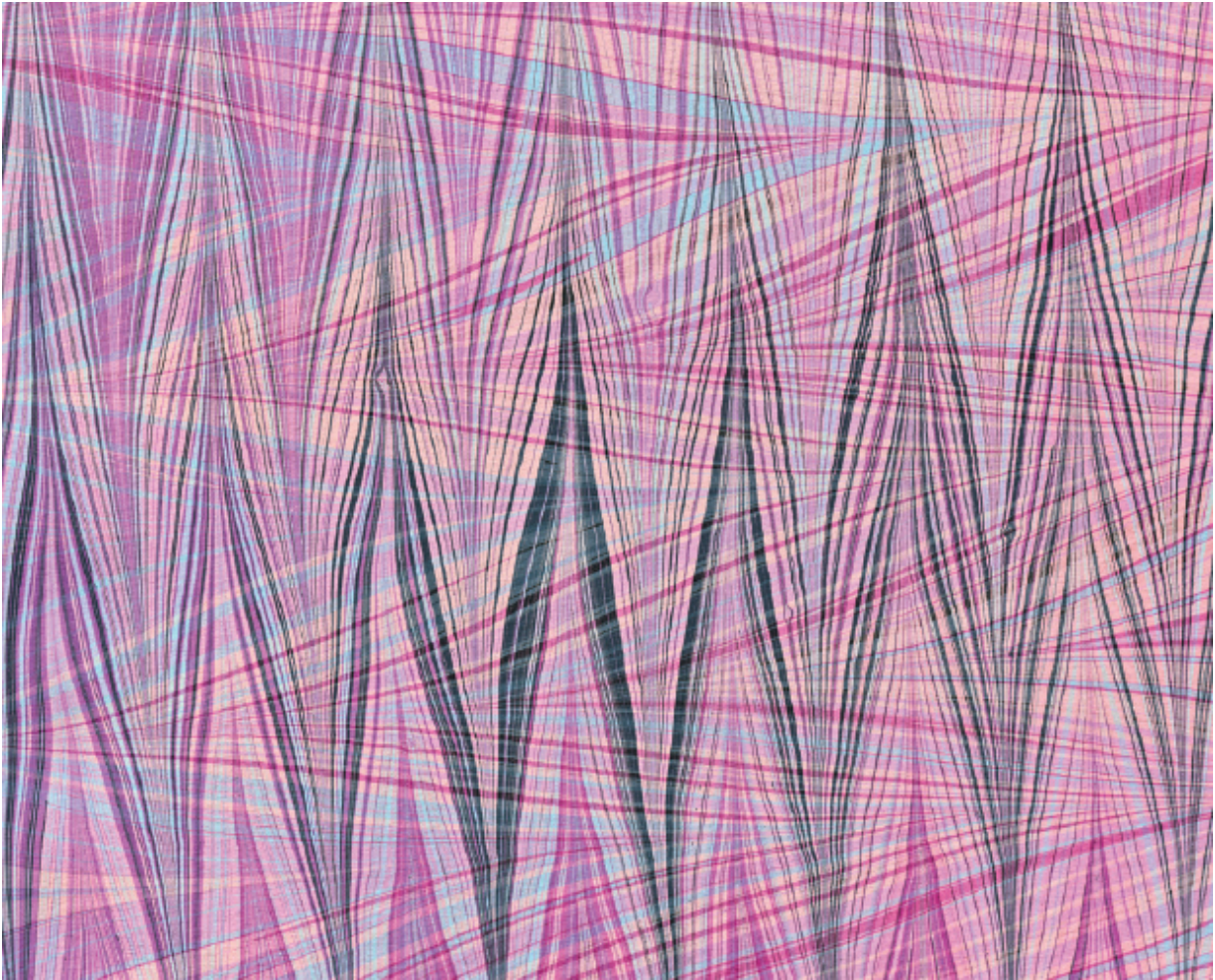
Alum Too Wet



Problem: If the alum is too wet, the paint will not adhere to the page. When you've worked so hard to create a beautiful marble design, having your pattern not show up is very disappointing.



Solution: Let the alum dry so that the paper is damp or completely dry (see page). Since you can add alum to paper months before using it, it's a good idea to alum paper well in advance.



Missed a Spot



Problem: Missing a spot or two while alumining will create a disruption in your paper and give you less usable space.



Solution: Missing a spot happens to everyone at some point. If it happens more than once, no big deal; there are other areas of paper you can use for projects. If the area is small enough, you can use a colored pencil and fill in the gap; however, if the problem happens on multiple sheets in a row, go back and re-alum all of your papers.



Dust Spots



Problem: Dust specks from the air can get trapped in the paint. This is not a problem sometimes. It depends on the end use of your paper since it can sometimes add to the design of your pattern. If you need the pattern to be picture perfect, follow the directions for the solution below.



Solution: I actually have not found a solution to rid my studio of dust particles. (Unless you want to marble in a vacuum-sealed room.) If dust spots show up in my prints (as in the small dust specks in the photo below), I take watercolor pencils and fill in the gaps.



Too Much Paint



Problem: Sometimes you can add too much paint to your vat. Extra paint on the surface can disrupt the pattern, creating blobs of color.



Solution: If you use more than five to seven different layers of paint or go too crazy with a particular color and it's not adhering to the page, use less of that color next time.



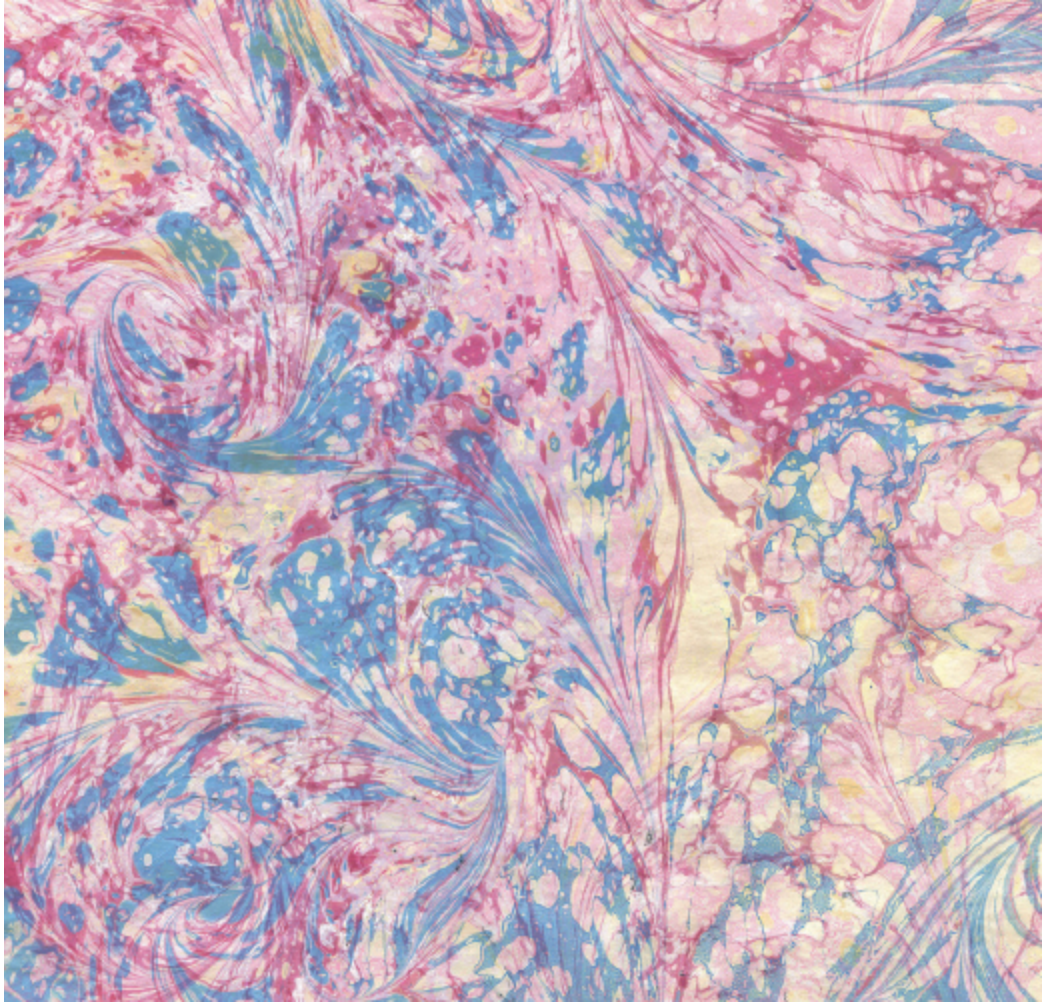
Sizing in the Paper



Problem: Sizing in the fiber of the paper is a problem because the paint will not stick to certain areas, creating a disruption in the pattern.



Solution: This problem is sometimes unavoidable, even if you are using the recommended paper for the project. If you're using a new type of paper, then that is most likely the issue. Stop using the new paper, and either find another new paper or return to the one you've used before. In the problem photo above, you can see evidence of this issue in all the white jagged spaces where the alum did not take due to the sizing in the paper.



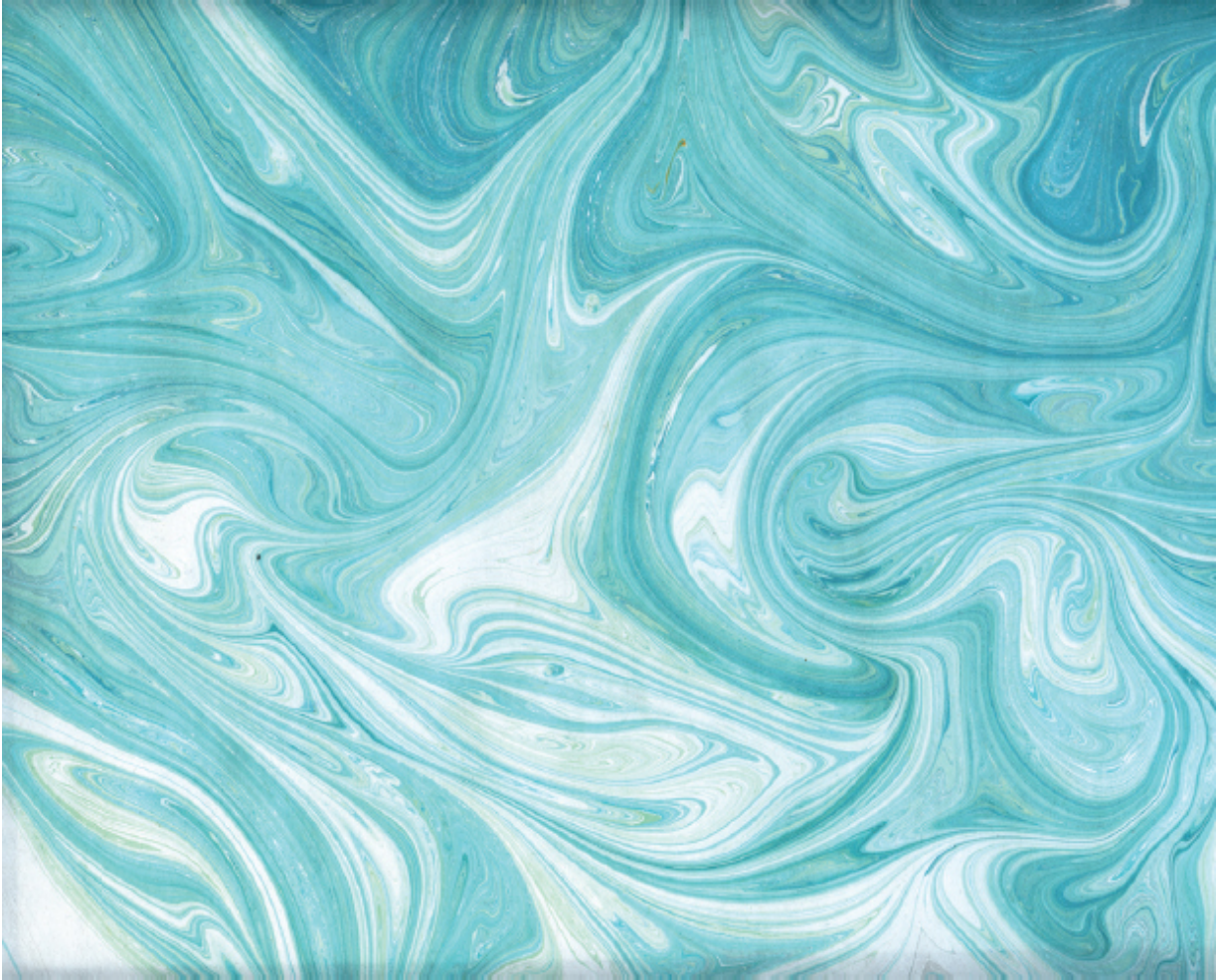
Paint Cracking



Problem: Paint drying on the surface of the bath before you apply your paper can lead to a different effect.

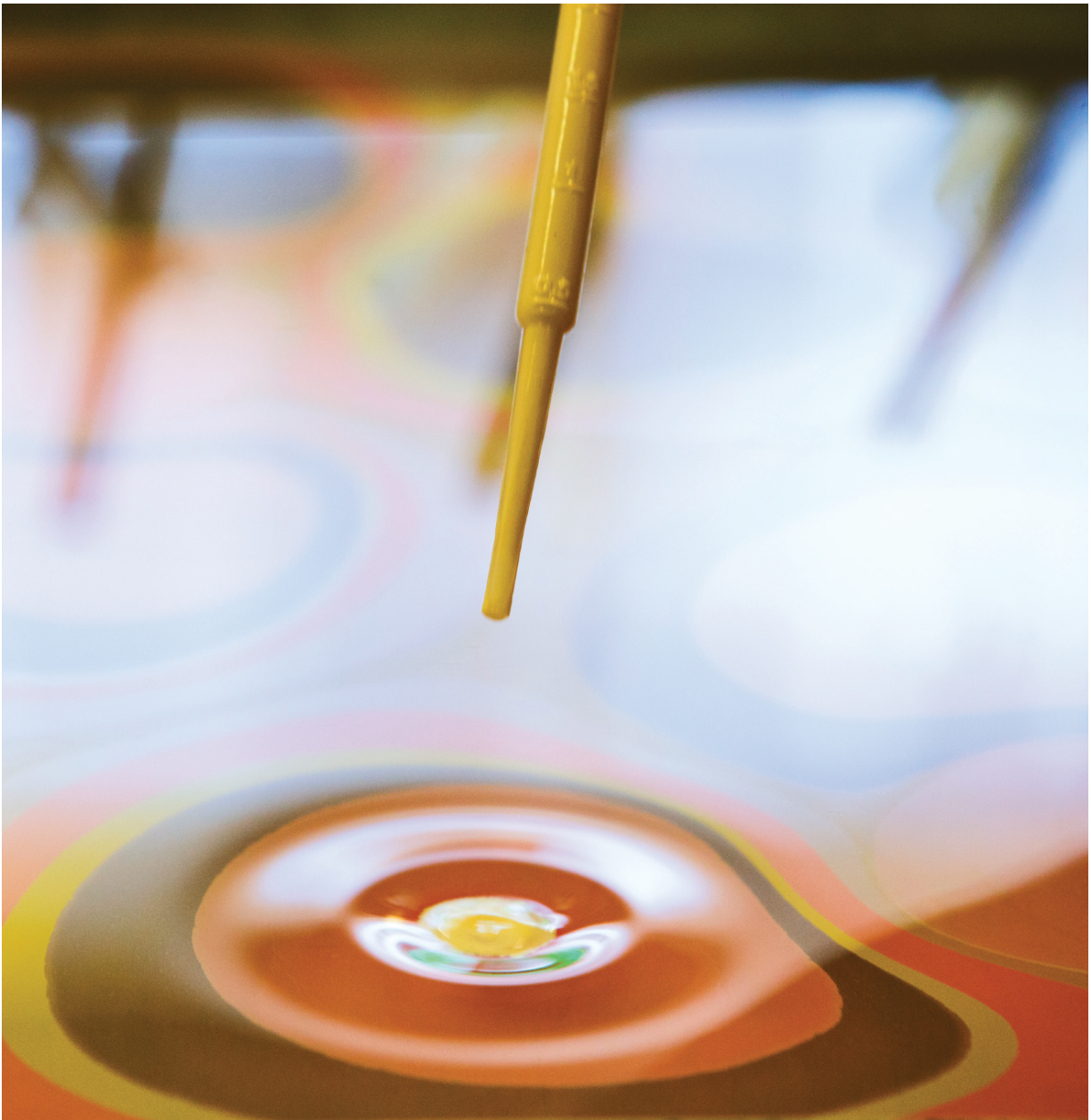


Solution: This is NOT a problem; it's a real technique called *baroque*. It was a desired effect in 17th-century France. Use it to your advantage, especially on the days where the air temperature is drying out the paint.



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RESOURCES



RESOURCES

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Etsy

www.etsy.com/shop/mermaidpatterns

Skillshare

www.skillshare.com/user/hrjdesignstudio

Marbling Tools & Supplies

Visit *www.foxchapelpublishing.com/suppliers* to find more resources. Also, be sure to check out your local art and craft retailers for supplies. The online shops listed here are specialty marbling and paper suppliers.

Colophon Book Arts

www.colophonbookarts.com

This small-business online retailer sells marbling and bookbinding tools and materials. Offers international shipping.

Dharma Trading

www.dharmatrading.com

What began as a yarn store in 1969, this small business now sells everything you might need for dyeing all your textile projects, including marbling materials and tools. Offers international shipping.

Galen Barry

www.marbleart.us

This site offers information on marbling techniques and sells marbling tools and supplies, including marbling combs, paint, and paper. Only ships within North America.

Hiromi Paper, Inc.

www.hiromipaper.com

Hiromi Paper, Inc. is a California-based retailer that works very closely with its Japanese papermakers to provide custom and fine art papers using traditional Japanese methods. Offers international shipping.

Paper Connection

www.paperconnection.com

Paper Connection offers fine art and specialty papers hand-crafted in various East and Southeast Asian countries. Only ships within the US.

Rosie's Workwear for Women

www.rosiesworkwear.com

Rosie's specializes in providing comfortable and practical coveralls and overalls tailored to fit women. This small business sells a selection of coveralls, bib overalls, gloves, tools, and tool belts. Offers international shipping.

Shanna Leino

www.shannaleino.com

Michigan-based studio artist Shanna Leino specializes in bookmaking and bookbinding (and even makes her own tools!). She offers workshops and

supplies you can implement when using your marbling pages to make your own books. Offers international shipping.

TALAS

www.talasonline.com

This bookbinding and book-conservation supply retailer also offers marbling tools, supplies, chemicals, and paper. Offers international shipping.

Washi Arts

www.washiarts.com

Washi Arts specializes in selling Japanese papers, tools, and supplies perfect for marbling. Also includes *suminagashi* kits to practice marbling in the traditional Japanese method. Offers international shipping.

Wet Paint

www.wetpaintart.com

This small business retailer sells a wide variety of art supplies, including paper, paint, and carriageenan. Offers international shipping.

On-Location Classes

Arrowmont

www.arrowmont.org

This visual art education center offers many different fine arts workshops (check their website for availability of marbling classes). Arrowmont is located in Gatlinburg, TN.

Austin Book Arts Center

www.atxbookarts.org

Located in Austin, TX, this arts center offers regular workshops in a variety of book arts areas, including paper marbling.

Center for Book Arts

www.centerforbookarts.org

The Center for Book Arts—based in New York, NY— views the book as an art form, and offers educational workshops in preserving and advancing this idea, including classes on paper marbling.

John C. Campbell Folk School

www.folkschool.org

This school fosters creative education in a variety of specialty fields, such as blacksmithing, crochet, dance, and gardening. There is an assortment of marbling classes offered for all levels. John C. Campbell Folk School is located in Brasstown, NC,

Minnesota Center for Book Arts

www.mnbookarts.org

Located in Minneapolis, MN, this art center focuses on preserving book art as an evergreen and ever-changing art form. A variety of classes designed for specific experience levels (from beginner to advanced) are taught by marbling experts.

The Morgan Conservatory

www.morganconservatory.org

This arts center is the largest in the US, and offers workshops in papermaking, book arts, and letterpress printing. It's also has a gallery and working studio, amongst other things. The Morgan Conservatory is located in Cleveland, OH.

North Bennet Street School

www.nbss.edu

North Bennet Street School is geared toward those seriously considering pursuing a career in various niche craftsmanship subjects, such as bookbinding. The bookbinding course frequently host guest instructors that teach specialty topics in paper making and marbling. North Bennet Street School is located in Boston, MA.

Penland School of Craft

www.penland.org

Penland is a craft education center that occasionally offers workshops in marbling textiles. It's located in Penland, NC.

San Francisco Center for the Book

www.sfcb.org

Located in San Francisco, CA, this arts center offers workshops in bookmaking, including several classes on marbling paper.

Practicing Marblers

Antonio Vélez Celemín

www.antoniovelezcelemin.blogspot.com

Antonio is a marbling artist based in Madrid, Spain. He offers a marbling course that teaches and builds off the four foundational marbling patters (stone, getgel, chevron, and nonpareil).

Barb Skoog

www.barbskoog.com

Barb is a Los Angeles-based artist that specializes in the Ebru marbling technique. She offers online courses and supplies through her website.

Diane Mauer

www.dianemaurer.com

Diane is an internationally recognized expert paper artist that has had her art commissioned by Lenox China, Godiva Chocolates, and the White House. She has taught classes throughout the US and still offers private classes.

Galen Barry

www.marbleart.us

Galen is a nationally renowned artist that has taught at numerous colleges and universities across the US. He provides valuable information and sells tools and supplies through his website.

Iris Nivens

www.marblingpaper.com

Iris specializes in reproduces traditional marbled papers that date back between 1800–1860 by making her own paints, using the same pigments when possible.

Jemma Lewis

www.jemmamarbling.com

Jemma runs the UK-based paper marbling studio that produces marbled paper for trade and wholesale customers.

Karli Frigge

www.karli-frigge.com

Karli is a Dutch bookbinder and marbler who has published several sample books that display her original marbled patterns.

Mimi Schleicher

Mimi is an internationally recognized studio artist and coauthor of *Marbling Paper & Fabric* and *Marbled Designs*.

Natalie Stopka

www.nataliestopka.com

Natalie is a freelance textile artist that creates historical and contemporary patterns for her clients. She also teaches workshops at the Textile Art Studio in New York City, NY, as well as several other locations in the US.

Regina & Dan St. John

www.chenarivermarblers.com

Regina and Dan St. John are the owners of Chena River Marblers. They sell fine marbled papers, silks, and hand-bound books.

Sally Power

www.sallypower.com

Sally is a member of the Minnesota Center for Book Arts where she teaches classes in marbling. Interested parties may commission her marbling skills for papers and gifts through her website.

Steve Pittelkow

Steve has been an expert marbler for over 35 years, and has taught marbling and book binding all over Europe and the US.

Susan Schneider

www.shandells.com

Susan applies her marbling skills to vintage lampshades, matchboxes, and home accents. She also teaches marbling workshops.



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

My artistic roots began in northern Minnesota, where I spent a large portion of my childhood surrounded by makers, entrepreneurs, and small business owners. The people around me taught me to be resourceful by making things from the tools and materials easily found around the house. It was one snowy winter that I discovered a man by the name of Bob Ross on PBS. I was mesmerized by his painting. The third time I saw the program, I took my box of crayons and a ream of paper, sat in front of the television and “painted” along with Bob. It wasn’t until college that I became serious about being an artist at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities. After obtaining a Bachelor of Arts in Studio Arts, I worked in television production and advertising. A few years ago, I decided to leave behind the world of advertising and ventured into artistry, entrepreneurship, and teaching.

My artistic journey has led me to surface pattern design and decorative arts. I use methods from centuries-old traditions, such as marbling, *suminagashi*, pochoir, linocut, woodblock printing, etc., and incorporate them into my current practice focused in the following areas: artist books, hand lettering, graphic design, surface pattern design, quilting, and illustration (hand and digital).

I teach classes on marbling and other surface design techniques at Minnesota Center for Book Arts, Textile Center located in Minneapolis, MN, and around the world.

My surface designs are represented by MHS Licensing and licensed to manufacturers and put onto products for home décor, hydration, wall art, tabletop, wallpaper, and quilting fabrics. You can find out more about me and my work at www.hrjdesignstudios.com.



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I owe the deepest thanks to Sophia Campbell, who suggested we go to the Bell Museum one extremely cold and snowy night in February. It was this trip to the museum where I first saw marbling being done, and the experience forever changed my life.

To the Minneapolis Public Librarians, who helped me find books on the topic of marbling when I was first starting out.

To the Minnesota Center for Book Arts (MCBA), for offering classes in this art form. I want to thank the MCBA staff (past and present), instructors, artisans, and co-op members who welcomed me with open arms and have given me an opportunity to shine. My marbling instructors (now friends) Sally Power and Sue Bjerke, who helped me hone my skills. To all the practitioners of marbling who, when I showed up on your doorstep or in your class, were willing and able to share your knowledge. To Dan St. John, Regina St. John, Steve Pittelkow, and many more marblers that have pushed me to be a better artist.

To the master marblers, who have come before me.

To all my contemporaries, who continually foster the craft.

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